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Friday
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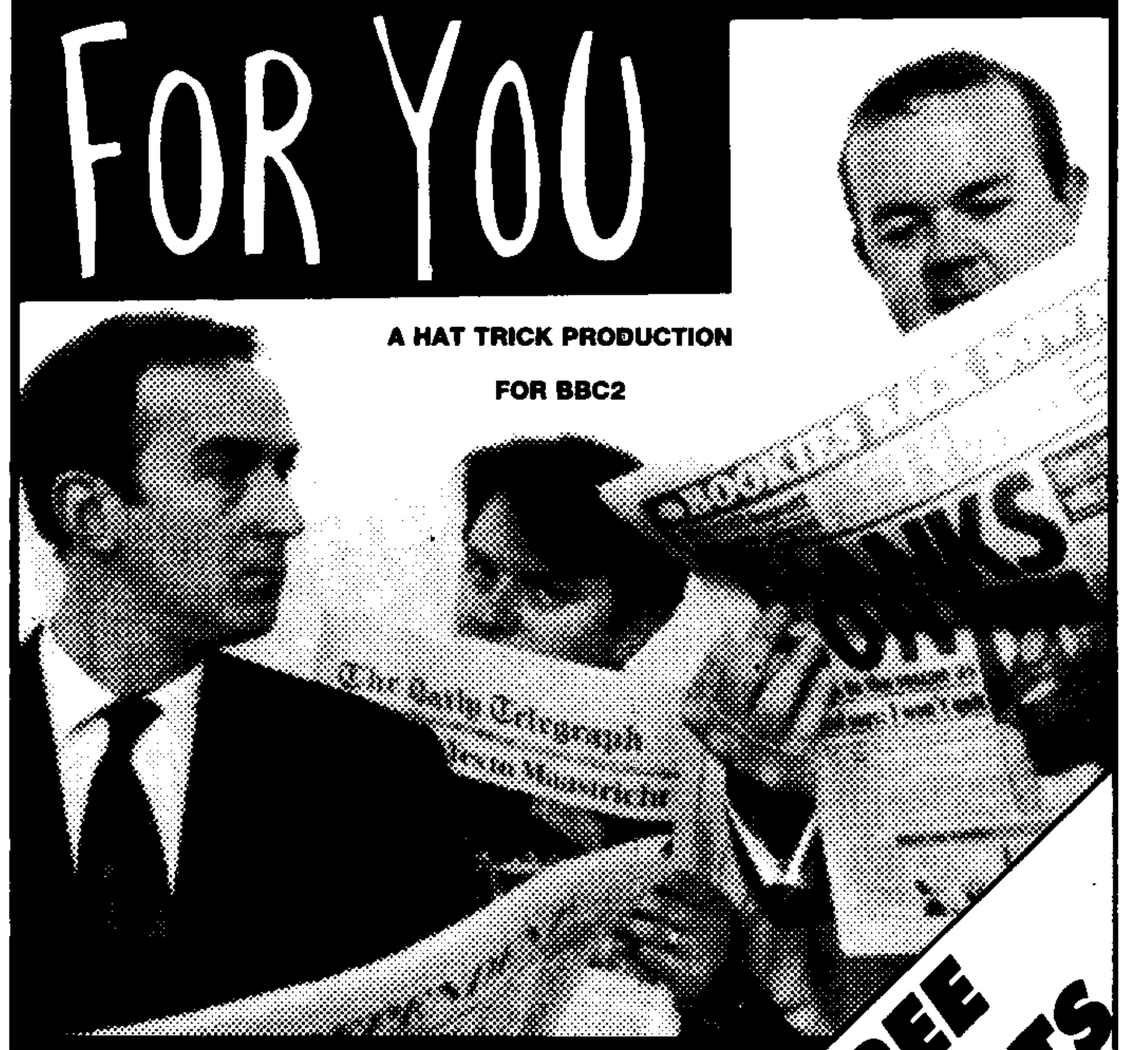

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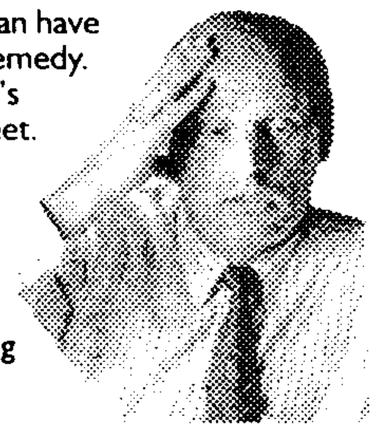

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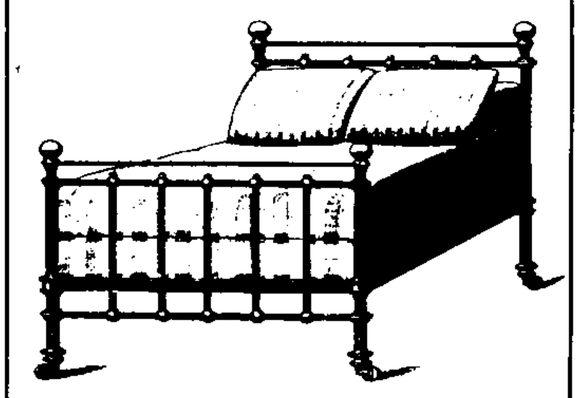

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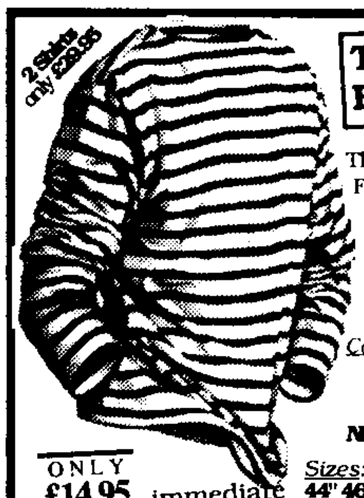

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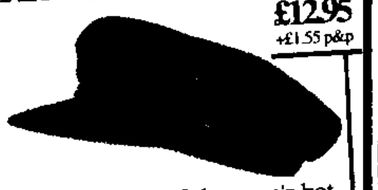

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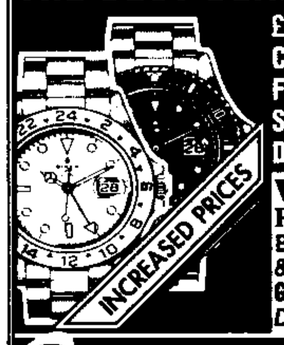

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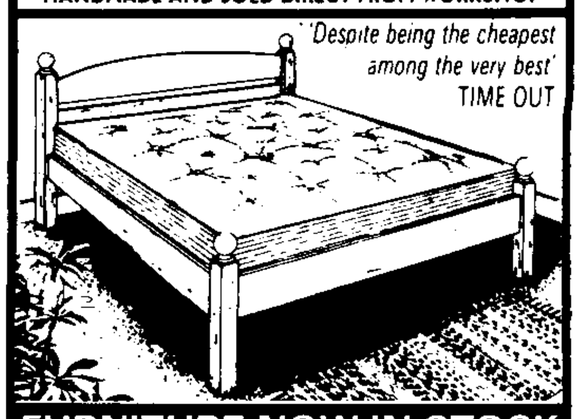

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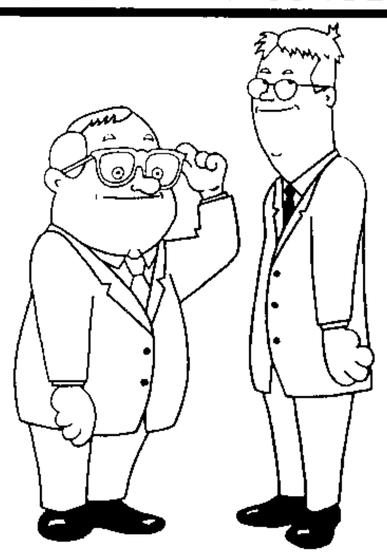

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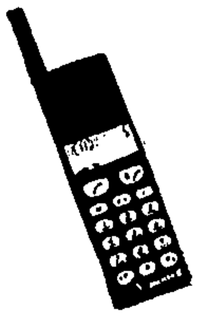

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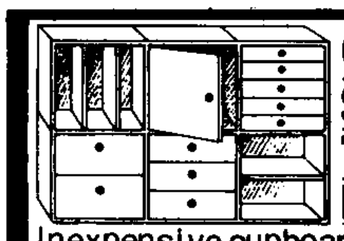

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The Indescribablyselfrighteous

and

The Indescribablyselfrighteous on Sunday

THE so-called reporting of the negotiations over the future of our newspapers has been one of the greatest scandals of the century.

Our rivals have used our silence on the matter (an absolute moral necessity during negotiations) as a chance to pour out all the hatred and the bile that they have been storing up for years. The sheer malice of their diseased and feverish speculation marks a low point in British journalism.

And it *is* only because the others are jealous of us that they make up all these pathetic stories about the Indescribablyselfrighteous being taken over by MGN (MegaGnome News).

Yes, the rest of Fleet Street is so desperately jealous of our brilliant journalism, our incredible popularity, our wonderful circulation figures and our amazing bank balance that they try and imply that we're going bust because no one buys our dull papers and we'll therefore take money from absolutely anyone who has got a suitcase full of readies.

Nothing could be further from the truth and now that a minor refinancing deal with Lord Gnome has been agreed, we can at last set the record straight.

The Indescribablyselfdeluding and the Indescribablyselfdeluding on Sunday remain independent newspapers. Lord Gnome has no say in our future.

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PRIVATE EYE COLOUR SECTION

THE *Independent* ("It isn't. Are you?") made much of its remarkable scoop that the attorney-general, Sir Nicholas Lyell, had been warned by MI6 not to prosecute the Matrix Churchill directors since at least one of them was working for the security services.

If the story were true, of course, it tolled the death knell for the unfortunate Lyell. It implied that he had ignored a clear warning from intelligence and went ahead with a prosecution in full knowledge that it would damage the country's intelligence about what was by then an enemy — Iraq.

The day the scoop appeared, the attorney-general himself issued a denial. That was perhaps predictable; but the denial was backed in the most earnest, forceful and even convincing way by the prime minister and by his office. They made it clear there had been no intelligence warning whatever to Sir Nicholas.

If the denial turns out to be justified, where did the bum story come from? A leak to the *Eye*, which sounds every bit as credible as the leak to the *Indie*, confirms that the source was the ministry of defence — very high up in the ministry of defence. So high up, indeed, that the source appears to have been indistinguishable from the secretary of state himself, Malcolm Rifkind QC.

If Rifkind did indeed leak the story, then poor Sir Nicholas has important people gunning for him from all sides. Not only is Michael Heseltine thirsting for revenge over what he sees as Lyell's contemptuous treatment of Hezza's friend and campaign manager, Michael Mates, in the Asil Nadir affair; but now, it seems, all the ministers, including Rifkind, who signed public interest immunity certificates (gagging orders) are out to shift the blame. Where more easily than on to Lyell?

INSTEAD of sacking soldiers while they risk their lives in Bosnia, the ministry of defence could make much worthier savings by controlling contractors who share its £8 billion annual procurement budget.

A recent beneficiary of MoD largesse was Marconi Command and Control Systems (MCCS), which received a two-year, £100 million *fixed-price* contract in 1985 to supply a computer-controlled artillery supply system known as Bates. When the MoD finally accepted a working system last July, the cost to the taxpayer had risen to £300 million.

In another triumph for the Sir Peter Levine's "contracting out" regime, MCCS grossly underbid to secure the contract and had to resort later to various contractual ploys to hike the price.

NETWORK SouthEast has introduced one of the benefits of privatisation in advance of the 1 April D-day — by shutting the customer service information office at London Victoria.

At the end of this month the entire BR network will be split into numerous shadow train operating companies to show everyone how things will not work when private franchisees get started.

NSE's positive start came about because its two internal divisions — South Eastern and South Central — could not agree how much each should pay towards the information centre. In the end they agreed both should pay nothing.

Withdrawal of facilities was a disincentive for travellers. Lost custom, however, was less important than who paid for what — just as it will be when BR becomes 25 watertight compartments, each obsessed with its own account books.

WHAT a terrible blow for the Tory party: United Biscuits, the most faithful of all contributors, has decided to slash its annual sub from an average of £130,000 to £30,000.

How do the directors imagine Sir Norman Fowler, the party chairman, will pay off the Tories' £19 million overdraft if other companies behave with that sort of parsimony?

Before sobbing readers reach for their chequebooks, the *Eye* can reveal that the Royal Bank of Scotland (chairman: former Tory defence minister Lord Younger) has told Sir Norman that the overdraft can go as high as the Tories like: it won't be called in. (Not all account-holders at the Royal Bank, it is said, have the same guarantee).

This is specially generous in view of the huge loss the Royal Bank has made on its brilliant new scheme to provide credit cards for Tory party members.

IAN BYATT, director-general of the water regulator, Ofwat, has sacked Diana Scott, the chair of Ofwat's Yorkshire branch, after she made the mistake of thinking that her role was to speak up for water customers.

She is the only Ofwat regional chair to have been sacked so far, and her "crime" was to oppose Byatt's enthusiasm for water metering. Two members of Ofwat's customer services committee in Yorkshire have resigned in protest.

Diana Scott, who joined Ofwat after managing a citizen's advice bureau, was not a "yes" person. Happily, her handpicked replacement is Eric Wilson, whose background is in the higher echelons of banking. He will, of course, be much better at representing customers' interest against the corporate might of the water companies.

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Street of Shame

HAVING staked out Michael Aspel for three months to expose his affair with 47-year-old "production girl" Irene Clark, executives at the *Sunday Mirror* were incandescent last Saturday morning to learn that the *News of the Screws* was on the case as well.

Worse still, the *Screws* had found out about the story by obtaining a print-out from the *Mirror*'s own computer. The *Screws* ran the piece on Sunday, cheekily billing it as "exclusive".

A full-scale leak inquiry is under way. Alas, it won't have far to look: in the rush of moving to Canary Wharf recently, the *Mirror* neglected to install proper "password protection" on its computer, thereby enabling rivals to hack into MGN's system at will.

A FRONT-PAGE story in last week's *Observer* gleefully revealed that Prince Charles was being accused of "intellectual theft" by an architectural magazine in Ulster, *Perspective*.

It claimed the prince had pinched the mag's title for his own new journal, *Perspectives on Architecture*. But what the article neglected to mention was that the *Observer* itself is guilty of a similar offence.

In two weeks' time the *Observer* magazine will be relaunched in a new, tarted-up form, under the name *Life* — which is, of course, also the title of a venerable American magazine. Unlike the Ulster architects who run *Perspective*, Time-Life Inc. has a vast battery of corporate lawyers who are even now preparing to sue the *Observer* for breach of copyright, trademark infringement and much else besides.

MAX HASTINGS, gung-ho editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, has been in the wars again, courtesy of the RAF.

The veteran yomper, who won the Falklands conflict singlehanded, was invited to ride in a Tornado with 617 squadron. Taking off from RAF Marham in Norfolk, he was in the air for an hour and 40 minutes, but began to feel unwell.

Sadly, Max was unable to remove his face mask before the first spasm hit him. With the second he introduced a bold new colour scheme to the normally drab backseat area of the jet.

Landing at RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire, the ex-Territorial Army para and author of such tomes as *Bomber Command*, was led off in a sorry state, leaving an RAF ground crew to clean up before a navigator took Max's seat for the return journey.

While underlings at Canary Wharf may snigger, who among the pygmy editors of Fleet Street would have been brave enough to try such a trick?

WITH nothing to say and too much space to say it, the strain of filling Andrew Neill's big organ with non-stories every week is showing at the *Sunday Times*.

The leader of 13 March, attacking John Major, attempted a paragraph-padding literary flourish. "The public, to paraphrase Oscar Wilde, believes that for the Tories to have lost one leader is a misfortune; to lose two would be incompetent."

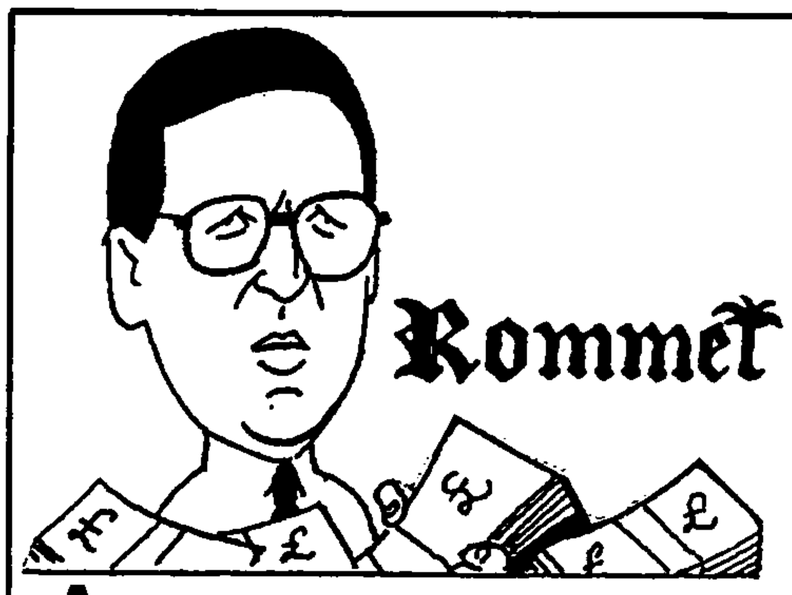
Turn the page, and in a long non-piece of pop psychology trend-spotting — about our fascination with serial killers — another *ST* writer was at it. "To paraphrase Oscar Wilde, to lose one daughter may be regarded as a sad misfortune, to lose two looks like a careless waste of life."

To paraphrase Lord Gnome: "To use one lowbrow literary cliché in a once great newspaper is sad. To use it twice is pathetic."

JOHN ROBERT-BLUNN retired last October after 33 years as the music critic of the *Manchester Evening News*, but even in retirement he continued to write regular notices for the paper.

Not any more, however. After a Hallé orchestra performance of a work by Sir Harrison Birtwistle last month, Robert-Blunn was heard to shout "Rubbish!" A Hallé executive complained to the *MEN*'s assistant editor Ken Wood, who in turn reported this grave offence to Mike Unger, the paper's editor.

Unger's idea of free speech clearly differed from that of his critic: Robert-Blunn has not been allowed to write for the paper since.



A LONE freelance journalist, one Jane Preston, is bravely taking on the might of David "Rommel" Montgomery's Mirror Group by suing it for unfair dismissal and sexual discrimination.

The case was due to begin at the West Croydon industrial tribunal on 11 February but has been adjourned, probably until April. Interested spectators would include not only other victims of the new regime at the Mirror Group but also hacks from the *Indescribablyboring*, who are anxious to know how safe their jobs will be in Rommel's hands.

They are unlikely to be reassured when they hear the facts of the case. In late 1990 Preston was hired by the *People*'s colour supplement to write profiles and supply showbiz gossip. Editors came and went but she remained a full-time occupier of a Mirror Group desk — to all intents and purposes a staff member, even though for tax purposes her status was self-employed.

Editor Bill Hagerty was so taken with her work that he gave his blessing to a scheme whereby she was paid a weekly wage for a package of editorial services which required her to come in every day and do a vast amount of work.

In April 1993, Preston was summarily dismissed by the *People*'s new editor, Bridget "Death" Rowe, for that most heinous breach of faith in the new Monty culture: she got pregnant. Having turned up for work as usual one day, shortly before she was due to depart on maternity leave, she was suddenly informed by the *People*'s TV editor Frank Walker (aka Mr Vicki Woods) that Rowe wanted her out of the building at once. (Ever the bold one, la Rowe refused to speak to Preston and hid herself away in her locked office, presumably poring over the cute kitten and puppy pictures she fills her paper with.)

Rowe had also decreed that if Preston did not leave that minute, she would be forcibly escorted form the office by the private militia of security guards which Monty has posted on every floor at Holborn Circus. One outraged sub-editor, Tony Duncan, denounced Walker and Rowe as "fucking cowardly turds". Inevitably, he was obliged to leave shortly afterwards and now works at the *Express*.

The powers that be at MGN are contesting Preston's case for unfair dismissal, and have hired a battery of expensive lawyers from Lovell White Durrant. So far, however, she is refusing to be intimidated.

When the case is eventually heard, one trusts David Montgomery will be quizzed about one of the assurances he gave on arriving at the Mirror Group — to the effect that pregnant staff could look forward to job security. As for la Rowe, perhaps someone should remind her of a signed editorial she wrote in the *People* last year congratulating the Princess Royal on he pregnancy (phantom, as it turned out). The toothy horse-lover — Rowe, that is — proudly described herself as "a mother and a working woman". All right for some, eh Bridget?

LEGAL NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS to the Law Society on its sponsorship of the new British-Middle East Law Council (BMELC), which hopes to foster close links with lawyers from the Middle East.

One of its aims is "the supervision of programmes for the placement of Middle Eastern lawyers in legal offices in the UK." How appropriate, then, that BMELC's secretary, who is also on the council's executive committee, is John Osborne, of London solicitors Clifford Chance.

Eye readers will recall that Clifford Chance's staff has for years included one Sadiq Jafar, son of Jafar Jafar, the head of Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons programme; and that Sadiq more recently has been working on secondment to Sharjah-based Crescent Petroleum, a company owned by his uncle Hamid, the brother of Saddam's atomic supremo.

Readers will also recall the irony that Crescent's affairs at Clifford Chance are handled by a certain Jeremy Carver, who also acts for Saddam's victim, the emirate of Kuwait.

Noticeably absent from the list of BMELC luminaries is Mark Stephens, whose firm, Stephens Innocent, not only has a number of eminent Arab clients but also helped humble Mr Carver's client, Crescent Petroleum, in a recent libel action.

HUBBARD & CO, the Portsmouth law firm at the centre of Peggy Wood's longstanding row with the Law Society (see *Eyes passim*), has had a complaint it made to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission chucked out.

Miss Wood complained to the Law Society about conflict of interest and alleged negligence by the Law Society. It was around this action that a BBC *Watchdog* programme was made, which Hubbard & Co claimed misrepresentation in several respects.

However, the commission concluded that "it was not unfair that the item did not examine the disputed matters about Miss Wood's conduct" and dismissed the complaint.

EDUCATION

MORE on Noshaba Hussain, the £28,000 a year head of Birmingham's Springfield primary school who showed brilliant creative writing skills in her job application.

Her appointment — confirmed by two governors of whom one was a colleague in the Muslim parliament and the other, his nephew, belonged, like Hussain, to Sparkbrook Conservative party — came to an end when she was sacked in December.

She appealed, thus remaining on the pay-roll, but her sacking was confirmed last week. Not wanting to give up £500 a week without a fight, Hussain is planning to ask the high court for an injunction and wants the Commission for Racial Equality to back a claim for race discrimination.

Either way, while the dilapidated school's 600 pupils make do with no equipment, Mrs Hussain is guaranteed her salary for doing nowt until at least 31 August — the dunderhead city council missed legal deadlines for the appeal.

HALLO!

The new heartwarming column

HALLO! AT LAST some heart-warming news from the former Yugoslavia. The recent visit of the House of Commons defence committee — including such gallant statesmen as Sir Nicholas Bonsor, Bruce George and Sir Nicholas Fairbairn — brought great joy to the British forces serving with the United Nations.

The MPs did their best to boost morale among a force still digesting news of the recent redundancies, and none tried harder than dear Nicky Fairbairn, resplendent in tartan trews and a "kiss-me-quick" nautical cap, who staggered from department to department, saluting haphazardly and staring into the middle distance, despite the fact that it was only 9.30 in the morning.

A visit to a logistic location brought out a flourish of parliamentary cheque-books and credit cards, as the NAAFI shop endeavoured to satisfy the Hon. Members' requirements. Once again, the lead was taken by Fairbairn, who inquired whether the Scotch whisky on sale (to NAAFI customers at very competitive rates) would be given free to members from north of the border.

"No sir, only duty-free," came the weary reply. Nicky duly purchased a large bottle. Later in the day, visiting a second logistic location, he did not look in the best of health. He explained that he was suffering from a "viral infection".

Arduous fact-finding missions such as this allow the hard-working committee to fulfil its obligation to the House by thorough and objective inspection of HM forces. One trusts the House feels it is getting as good value for its money from the committee as the committee evidently did at the NAAFI.

HALLO! **LORD MONKSWELL, the campaigning Labour peer, invites Hallo! into his new home to talk exclusively about his interest in penal reform — and to explain why, when he battered a south Manchester psychotherapist around the head with a spanner, it was all in a good cause.**

The bearded 5th Baron, speaking from the prison cell where he will be spending 14 weeks at Her Majesty's Pleasure, actually engineered his imprisonment to study the problems faced by the criminal underclass at close quarter.

This selfless act is not surprising. When Councillor Gerry Collier — as he is known to fellow members of Manchester's ruling Labour group — took his seat in the Lords in 1989, he said he wanted to "change the system from the inside". When a therapist suggested to his paramour that her mental health would improve if she stopped seeing his lordship, the perfect opportunity presented itself!

Lord Monkswell will be greatly missed by fellow members of Chorlton Labour party, who have been a bit unlucky of late. Last year councillor Chris Rogers was murdered in a "gay-love frenzy" while wearing women's "clothing" (*Use designer's name if known. The Marquesa.*) **It turns out that he had a torture chamber hidden in the cellar of his east Manchester house, which was regularly-used — the house, that is, as a campaign headquarters for councillors and the local Labour MP, Mr Gerald Kaufman!**

HALLO! *THANK heaven for Louise Hobkinson, whose bubbly presence has contributed so much to the debate on the future of Europe.*

Louise, who is tall, blonde and looks amazingly intelligent in a lycra micro-mini, is well qualified to appear in the tabloids (Shurely "To help shape public opinion on this vital issue"? The Marquesa) and has been very active in the PR campaign of the Tories' leading Eurosceptic, Bill Cash.

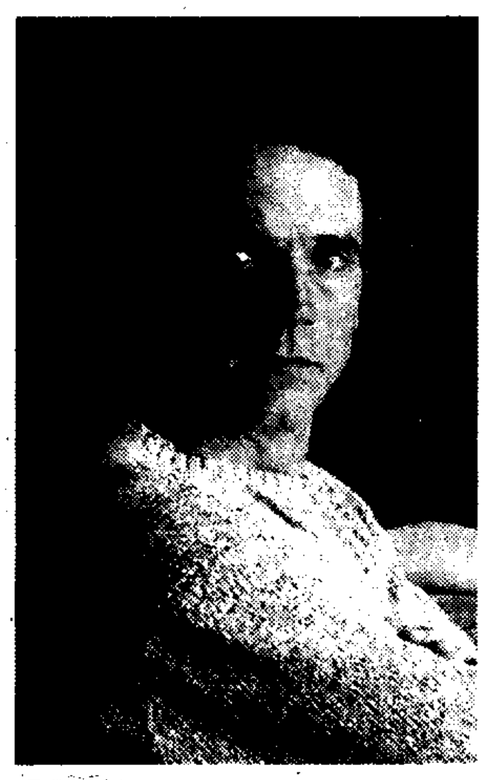
Sad to report, then, that her involvement has caused a rift at the heart of Euroscepticism, whatever that might be.

Louise is described as Mr Cash's "high-flying" Commons secretary, which probably irritates Cash's actual Commons secretary, Marie-Therese Rossi, daughter of ex-Tory MP Sir Hugh Rossi. Louise has never worked at the Commons and, by an oversight, only obtained her pass a month ago.

She is in fact employed by the European Foundation, the pressure-group which gives a purpose to Cash's existence. And her grasp of the issues is impressive. After only three months in the job, she was asking such searching questions as Who is Michael Portillo? and What does "anathema" mean?

Ian Milne, the spoilsport director of the foundation, has rowed with Cash, the foundation chairman, over Louise. We are told that he has insisted that if Cash must employ her she should be described to the press as his "Commons secretary", and nothing to do with his boring foundation.

Radio



Gloria Hunniford

Radio Times

HALLO! TRUE to form, those silly goats at the 66th Academy Awards have got it wrong again.

Where, for example, was the nomination and Oscar for Sir Anthony Hopkins' brilliant performance in the Welsh Tourist Board's massive advertising campaign to attract visitors to the principality?

Few actors can stand on a windswept mountain in just an anorak and achieve such astonishing fees (*Shurely "astonishing feats of emotional depth"? The Marquesa*) — and yet the judges passed it by completely.

Perhaps they were confused by a previous mountain top performance in which Sir Anthony launched a campaign by conservation volunteers — to save the footpaths of Snowdownia from destruction under the feet of too many tourists in anoraks.

'The Marquesa'

Pseuds Corner

Language is about language, not plot, not character, not up-to-dateness, not fashion, not shock, not prettiness, but words for the attention of the ear and not the skim of the eye. No one working in the English language now comes close to my exuberance, my passion, my fidelity to words.

JEANETTE WINTERSON
Sunday Times

...a penis is like an extension, it's like your hand or your arm, it goes outward from you. You are testing things, you probe. Men when they urinate have this arc, they project outward, and they have to learn how to do it. Adulthood is learning how to aim, to focus, to make an arc of transcendence. Women merely water the ground they stand on.

CAMILLE PAGLIA
Independent

Women will have the chance to become God for 15 seconds at the Women's Day festival on Sunday March 6, at Tynemouth Station.

News Guardian, Newcastle

There is a chill wind blowing through the streets of Gloucester. Borne on its whispering silence, like the pollen of deadly nightshade, is the stench of death.

NEIL NORMAN
Evening Standard

Tibetan communicators 'absolutely brilliant'

Lynne Franks has just led a workshop on 'holistic communications' at the Samye Ling Tibetan Centre on Holy Isle, off Arran... The theme was 'Networking with a Sacred Outlook', and started with meditation led by the Retreat's Master, Lama Yeshe Losal, who believes that: 'Whether we succeed in communicating or not depends on the clarity of our inner vision.'

PR Week

His [Hussein Chalayan's] degree collection — which was never intended as a commercial enterprise — was inspired by the 17th century philosopher Descartes. The collection tells the story of a fictional character of his own invention — Streva Kraemer, a female scientist. This literary approach gives his clothes a duality. On one level they can be appreciated simply as beautifully crafted garments, but they also hold a strong sense of history and narrative. His paper clothing is far more durable and wearable than it first appears.

Observer

At first glance, this stocky middle-aged man [Anthony Hopkins] is fairly unremarkable. He could be a teacher or a social worker in his sober tweed jacket and his clean white shirt. But then he reaches out and grasps my hand, tucks his glasses into his pocket and looks up at me with those pale blue, glistening eyes. And just for a second; the world stops.

It's as if he punched me in the solar plexus. I suddenly find it difficult to breathe.

DJINN GALLAGHER
The Sunday Tribune

CONTRIBUTORS: D. Franklin, Everybody, C. Johnson, Anon, W. Robson, Anon, J. Williams.

£10 paid for entries

WHEN David Evans, right-wing Tory MP for Welwyn Hatfield, attacked Labour's Dennis Skinner in the Commons recently it gave Tories the chance to suck on their humbugs.

In a late-night debate on "back to basics", Evans described the Beast of Bolsover as "a silly old fool — no fool like an old fool — who dresses in disguise, lurks in bushes in Belgravia and helps cement that special relationship between Britain and the United States".

Sitting beside him and cheering was David Ashby, Tory MP for North West Leicestershire and a man clearly without shame. Only days earlier he had confessed that he had slept with a number of men for various non-sexual reasons.

PS: The next day, when the Beast of Legover entered the chamber, the Tories chanted "Lois, Lois" in a reference to Skinner's secretary. Skinner replied by bawling out "Portillo, Portillo". He should clarify what he means and repeat it *outside* the chamber. Whereas the Skinner farce is known fact, the betting is he has nothing on Portillo that would convince a court.

THE Liberal Democrats let out a mighty screech when their leader, Paddy Ashdown, was not asked to speak at the big TUC demonstration against racialism on 19 March. They were quoted officially as saying that Pantsdown had been "banned".

The real reason no invitation was extended, however, is the banning by Tower Hamlets Liberal Democrats of anti-racists from their local parks.

Earlier this year, the controlling Lib Dem group on the council turned down an application for an Anti-Nazi League carnival in Victoria Park. The ANL had held a peaceful carnival there, attended by more than 200,000 people, in 1978.

Tower Hamlets council explained that its policy was to allow only one big event in the park every year — and it had already allocated this slot to a charity. The decision was vigorously denounced by anti-racist groups in the area as further proof of local Liberal Democrats' equivocal attitude to racial problems.

A few weeks later the TUC applied to hold a rally at the end of its anti-racist march in Victoria Park. The Lib Dems would have been delighted for such a respectable body to demonstrate on their patch and were just about to agree when someone pointed out their lame excuse for banning the Anti-Nazi League.

Oh dear. Hoist with their own pretence that Victoria Park could only take one big demo a year, the TUC was also banned. Not surprisingly, the TUC was not then too keen to ask Pantsdown to speak at the demo which his own party had kept out of the park.

PS: So resolute was Paddy to fight the racists that he decided that if he couldn't speak he wouldn't join the march.

JACK CUNNINGHAM, shadow foreign secretary, Cumbria's man of the people and deputy lord lieutenant of the county (known to colleagues as Alderman Vanity), has lost his marbles.

He is now regularly seen in the library, tea room and corridors of the House holding up copies of *Private Eye* and complaining that Backbiter is publishing true stories about him.

On 2 March, waving *Eye* 838 at a meeting of the shadow cabinet, he insisted that the story about his row with John Prescott at a previous shadow cabinet meeting was "so accurate" it could only have come from someone present at the meeting.

Prescott admitted to telling one or two people about the row, but others who had openly discussed it said nothing. Labour leader John Smith said the leaks had to stop.

When Cunningham complains about *this* leak at the *next* shadow cabinet meeting, Backbiter will report on that, too. This one could run and run.

MEANWHILE Cunningham has muscled in on the patch of Tom Clarke, Labour's likable spokesman on overseas development, over the Pergau dam affair.

The shadow foreign secretary has insisted on making all the big speeches in Parliament — and getting all the Labour publicity in the arms for trade saga.

The issue was first raised by Labour's frontbench in 1991 when the then aid spokesperson, Ann Clwyd, wrote to Sir John Bourn, comptroller and auditor general, alleging that three British construction companies were involved in paying £35 million in bribes to secure contracts. Sir John was unable to decide on the issue as he had no power to audit the books of the three companies, even though public money was involved.

However, from 1991 up until a few weeks ago Cunningham took no interest in the subject whatsoever. He did no digging and asked no questions. Then as soon as the public spotlight was turned on, in he stepped — knocking poor Tom Clarke out of the way. Clarke has complained to the Labour leader, but to no avail.

DAWN PRIMAROLO, an intelligent Labour MP, is very much an endangered species.

In the last *Eye* Backbiter reported how, as No 2 in Labour's health team, she was being elbowed aside by David Blunkett. Since then other shadow cabinet members have turned on her.

Donald Dewar, the party's social security spokesman and a wizened Scot with the charisma of Fagin, complained to John Smith that Primarolo had supported a conference set up in defence of the welfare state.

The complaint seemed odd: partly because Labour is supposed to support the welfare state; and partly because the conference was organised by Bill Morris of the T&G and John Edwards of the GMU, both respected members of the Labour movement's mainstream.

Primarolo was summoned to see Smith, who was reportedly not amused at being made to look foolish by Dewar when it emerged that one of Dewar's shadow cabinet colleagues, Joan Lestor, actually spoke at the conference.

DES WILSON, "charismatic" former Liberal Democrat campaign director, of Shelter, National Council for Civil Liberties and rude first novel fame, has been recruited by the TUC as a public relations supremo for the sum of £50,000.

The news has stunned the TUC's press office, which has been told to axe two jobs to help cut costs and restructure the organisation because of falling membership and affiliation fees.

One of the workers facing the sack is a black female who is an expert on equal opportunities and women's' rights. New TUC general secretary John Monks, who abhors compulsory redundancies, may have a fight on his hands.

ROY BEGGS, Ulster Unionist MP for East Antrim and a former schoolmaster, was glimpsed having breakfast in the Commons on the morning after the passage of the prevention of terrorism (temporary provisions) bill and the announcement of a new select committee for Northern Ireland. He was eating two large oranges.

Backbiter was reminded of an exchange after a whisky reception for MPs at which Beggs asked a female Catholic Labour MP what she was doing

101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR

A SURF BOARD

afterwards, adding with a twinkle in his eye: "I like a bit of forbidden fruit."

"I'm partial to forbidden fruit, myself," the woman replied. "But I draw the line at a bitter Orange."

THERE was a time when Labour MPs became incandescent with rage if establishment figures, including farty old judges like Lord Denning, suggested that homosexualists had to be regarded as security risks and could not hold important jobs.

Labour's lamentable frontbench defence spokesman, David Clark, has now put adulterers in the same position by calling for an inquiry by MI5 into the affair between the chief of defence staff, Sir Peter Harding, and Bienvenida, Lady Buck.

Would Labour's shadow cabinet all pass the MI5 adultery test if they ever become ministers? Presumably they'll be too busy screwing the nation collectively to have time for individual R&R.

'Backbiter'

Dead body found at cemetery

Calcutta Telegraph

WEDDING DRESS beautiful design, white figured, size 10/12, pearls at cuffs and around the waist, ejaculate condition. £80.

Worthing Trader

BANKERS

AROUND 800 pensioners must rue the day they trusted the West Bromwich building society, whose dealings have already prompted one suicide and threaten to make dozens homeless.

Back in the 1980s the society offered pensioners huge mortgages in return for a lump sum — on condition they invested the lump sum with the West Brom.

The idea was to invest the cash in high-yielding bonds which would pay more than the interest the pensioners had to pay on their mortgages. But the scheme failed, the property market crashed and 800 elderly were left with vast mortgages, worthless bonds and negative equity.

Fimbra, the so-called watchdog which supposedly monitors financial advisers, investigated belatedly. For fear of embarrassing anyone as vulnerable as a financial institution, it is keeping its report secret.

A copy has been leaked to the *Eye*. And in it Fimbra slams the bungling of the West Brom and demands that it pay compensation. Sadly, the West Brom's chief executive, Glenn Elliot, has shown once again his profession's contempt for both the toothless watchdog and its own customers. "I am livid that a government watchdog should perform in this manner," he said.

NOOKS and CORNERS

MY PHOTOGRAPH shows a "classic" Modern Movement house. It is No 2 South Parade in Bedford Park, west London, and it was designed in 1937 by the architect F.A. Ruhemann for Mr and Mrs Neumann.

It is listed, and is one of a handful of such houses in Britain designed by Modern architects who had fled from Nazi Germany. For long hidden away among the red-brick Norman Shavian houses in the artistic suburb, it survived unaltered and unspoiled until last year when the aged owner died.

No 2 South Parade was then bought by two speculators — Mr G. Horsley and Ms V. Griffiths — who thought it worthy of "doing up" and selling on at a huge profit. This bright pair then proceeded to rip out all the period details like light fittings and built-in pieces of furniture. Unauthorised works were also carried out on the roof.

All this was illegal, of course, as it is a listed building. This the new owners ought to have known as they are being advised by one Brian Rayment, a former conservation officer to the London borough of Ealing. But Mr Rayment does not know best: English Heritage threatened enforcement action and many of the ripped-out fittings have miraculously reappeared.

The speculators now want to destroy the original kitchens and bathrooms. More seriously, they want to build an extension on the roof as a "master bedroom". This will completely change its character as ocean liner-style flat roofs and sun terraces are hallmarks of thirties Modern houses. A planning and

listed building consent application to build on the roof has therefore been opposed by the Twentieth Century Society, the Bedford Park Society, the local authority (Ealing), Docomomo — everybody, it seems, apart from one Very Important Person.

For the speculators have adopted an interesting tactic. In addition to sending in a stream of planning applications, they have taken to writing letters to the top, the chairman of English Heritage himself, Mr Jocelyn Stevens.

Now, there may be no connection but the curious thing is that, although the London advisory committee of English Heritage — consisting of outside architectural experts — unequivocally rejected the application to enlarge No 2 South Parade, the letter sent out by English Heritage officers implied that a smaller extension might be acceptable, which is not what the LAC said at all. In other words, they have been encouraged to try again to spoil this interesting listed building. Curious.

Now I know that a 1930s flat-roofed, brick and concrete Modern Movement house may not be everybody's cup of tea, but that is not my point. My point is that this is all too typical of the way English Heritage now seems to be responding to particular listed building consent applications.

There is the case of Num Appleton Hall in Yorkshire, where the owner, having demolished the Victorian wings, now wants to demolish the top storey and replace it by a conjectural 17th century style roof and cupola. English Heritage opposed this, so did its historic buildings advisory committee (HBAC). So the owner had a word in the ear of the chairman of English Heritage, who soon found that his commissioners disagreed with the boring old experts on the HBAC. So now English Heritage is not opposing the listed building consent application.

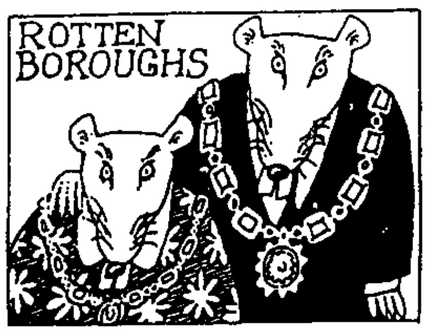
Then there was the recent case of Gilbey's warehouse in Harlow. This 1950s building was, perhaps surprisingly, listed on the advice of English Heritage. But that did not prevent its replacement by a Sainsbury supermarket, for English Heritage did not oppose demolition. As it happened, Chairman Stevens had seen this building from an interesting angle, having examined it from the air in Lord Sainsbury's helicopter. With massive authority buttressed by years of study, Piranha Teeth pronounced that he thought Gilbey's of no architectural quality.

And then there is the case of Rainhill Hospital at St Helen's in Lancashire, partly designed by the great Harvey Lonsdale Elmes, architect of St George's Hall in Liverpool. The owners, Pilkington's, the glass manufacturers, want to demolish this along with every other listed building which stands on their land in St Helen's.

This has come to a public inquiry, at which English Heritage was going to oppose demolition. But then Sir Lionel Pilkington had lunch with the chief executive of English Heritage. And now, quite coincidentally, of course, the national statutory advisory body on historic buildings was not represented at the inquiry.

When My Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, of blessed memory, was chairman of English Heritage and his aristocratic cronies tried to have a word in his ear so they could get a grant to repair their mouldering seats or get permission to demolish an inconvenient listed building, a standard letter would be sent out, telling them that their applications would be duly processed. But times have evidently changed.

'Piloti'



WIGAN

TROUBLE in Wigan where normally impecunious education officers have spent £250,000 without permission on a bizarre collection of antiquated vehicles which have been left to rot in secret locations.

They include a Bedford truck painted in municipal colours and a traction engine known as "Lively Lady" on which £65,000 worth of restoration was done even though it was only worth £30,000. Lively Lady was replaced by another engine, "Moriarty", which was later sold for scrap after spending six cobwebbed years in a council warehouse.

What clog-dancing Lancastrians are supposed to do with the remaining items will probably remain a mystery as four of the five education officers concerned have now quit. With consultants Coopers & Lybrand beginning the inevitable inquiry, the council says the episode is a one-off which shouldn't tarnish the authority's "good" name.

PS: Two years ago leisure services director Gilbert Swift had to go after spending a couple of hundred thousand of public funds on a narrow-gauge train for Haigh Hall leisure park. He named it "The Gilbert Swift".

BENT

THE Tories ruling Bent, sure to be ousted in May, are determined to see out their last few weeks in a blaze of glory.

Tory mayor Arthur Steel goes to work each morning — at Kilburn Job Centre — in his chauffeur-driven council limo, much to the delight of his dole-collecting "customers".

Meanwhile, eccentric former Labour councillor Nkechi Amalu-Johnson, recently returned triumphantly to the council chamber although she is still under investigation for fraud.

There were no paeans to Idi Amin or female circumcision. Instead she cuddled a soft toy which played military bugle tunes, audible whenever the debate lulled. Spotting local community relations leader Norman Mulling, she dispensed with the toy, threw her arms round his neck and sat on his lap.

LAMBETH

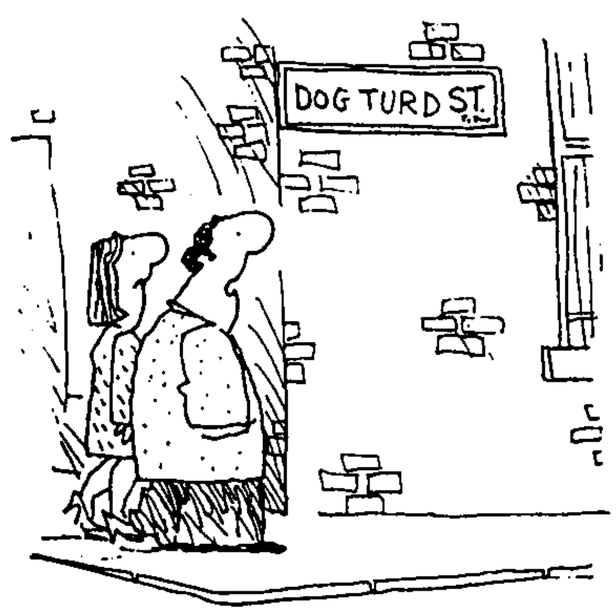
WHILE politics becomes more *physical* in corrupt Lambeth, nine councillors elected on the Labour ticket have been suspended from the party whip... for supporting socialist policies.

The nine can cause a lot of trouble for "official" Labourites if they side with the Liberal and Tory opposition — as they showed during the recent council tax-setting meeting.

They delayed the passing of a new tax for eight hours so that official Labour leaders would be open to the possibility of surcharge. Eventually a new figure was set — but not before an exciting bout of fisticuffs, in front of a cheering hundred-strong crowd, between Tory leader Peter Evans and the Liberals' Keith Fitchett.

Only a week before, a smaller crowd watched computer boss John Hatfield, incensed over proposed cuts in his department, burst into deputy leader John Harrison's office and exchange a frank set of views. He ended up splayed across a filing cabinet.

Meanwhile, barrister Elizabeth Appleby's report into the loony council's multi-million pound losses and corrupt contracts — finished last September — gathers dust on chief executive Henry Gilbey's desk. Its non-discussion in public is not linked to the fact that release could greatly impair Labour's (probably hopeless) campaign for the May elections.



"Well, at least this council's honest about things"

TV

The Living Soap
(BBC2)

STUDENT life, as all ex-students know, is tough and unforgiving. The whole terrible undergraduate rollercoaster — sleeping every day until midday, drinking yourself into oblivion at every opportunity, saying "like" every fourth word — ruins you for life thereafter, and instills in you a violent hatred of all subsequent generations of students.

It's no coincidence that of the current government's many daft innovations, the notion of student loans is the one that has caused the least fuss among the population as a whole. Indeed, the population as a whole doesn't give a monkey's. Idle workshy layabouts with unfortunate hygiene problems and appalling tastes in music? Serves them all right.

But if the reputation of students has declined over the years, nothing has done more to push it over the edge than **The Living Soap**. Running every Friday during term-time (itself an intrinsically offensive concept, redolent of long holidays and overland trips to India), this fly-on-the-wall production has given us a glimpse into the lives of six ordinary Manchester students struggling with essay crises and all the attendant traumas of university life. Or at least, that was the original idea. Rarely in television history has a long-term project gone so frighteningly off the rails.

For, six months into its scheduled year, *The Living Soap* is no longer a weekly documentary series about students. It is a weekly documentary series about students who are on television every week.

From the second episode, when one of the six was threatened in a bar because he was "famous", the curse of celebrity has distorted the entire project. In another early episode, one of the house's inhabitants went for an interview for a part-time job in a bar. Unlike the other interviewees, she brought a camera crew with her. Astonishingly, she got the job.

Later, another of the six started modelling in London, and the show exhaustively chronicled her exciting new career. Meanwhile, ex-students everywhere have sat and watched in mounting horror, occasionally shouting: "We never had sofas as nice as that in our house" when it all gets a bit too much.

The mistake, obvious to anyone who stops to think about it for more than a couple of seconds, was to transmit the episodes as soon as they were made. Other celebrated fly-on-the-wall experiments, like *Sylvania Waters*, were filmed in their entirety before any episodes were shown. What *The Living Soap* has turned into, by contrast, is a vivid illustration of the way being on television all the time completely screws up your life.

Indeed, four of the six students were so overwhelmed by the pressure that they have now left the house — the most recent because she was tired of tabloid press reports linking her romantically with Jason of Take That. If they weren't students, you might almost feel sorry for them.

And yet BBC Manchester perseveres with the series, with the final three-month run still scheduled for the summer. Auditions have been held for the vacated rooms, and a couple of weeks ago the latest addition to the cast was interviewed on Pebble Mill. But the series' tone has changed. The first batch of inhabitants didn't really know what they had let themselves in for, but the replacements, like embryonic Phillip Schofields, know exactly what's going on, and clearly see the series as a showcase for their own non-existent televisual talents.

Now, *The Living Soap* is no longer about students who are on television every week — it's about students who want to be on television every week. It has moved so far from its original ambit as to be a parody of a pastiche of a rather cruel joke at its own expense. To put it out of its misery before that final summer run would be an act of the purest charity.

'Couch Potato'

"I've done the right thing"

I-BSkyB

The Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: Darrol Skinner.

MEDIA NEWS

IT WAS disingenuous of the Independent Television Commission, the ITV "watchdog", to tell the *Daily Telegraph* (19 March) that there were "potential problems" with the sponsorship of Central TV's series *Peak Practice* by PPP, the private health insurance firm.

The ITC suggested it was responding to complaints that the sponsorship was "inappropriate". Complaints there certainly were; but what the ITC failed to disclose was that it had already investigated — and approved — the sponsorship deal before the present series started.

Advance scripts were demanded and studied by the regulators. When it emerged that the GPs' practice which features in the programme was an NHS practice and that nowhere in the series did anyone plug private health, ITC boffins heaved a sigh of relief. The rules state that the programme sponsored must in no way be seen to promote the sponsor's goods or services. Since no character actually promoted private health care, the sponsorship of a health-orientated series by a private health company was deemed to be all right.

PPP stumped up a sum not a million pounds less than £750,000 for the sponsorship, and laughed all the way to the bank. Now that the complaints are pouring in, the ITC pretends that it will have a serious look... at something it has already looked at seriously.

PS: The series has irritated the government almost as much the other health soap, *Casualty*. The GPs in *Peak Practice* are fundholders, and at least one of the programmes makes it clear — as everyone knows — that fundholders provide a fast track for patients to hospital, and therefore a two-tier health service.

The only person in the country who doesn't seem to know this is the minister of health, Dr Brian Mawhinney. He is still claiming that everyone in the health service, whether or not their GP is a fundholder, has equal rights.

RICHARD BRANSON can do no wrong as far as the broadcasting authorities are concerned.

His soporific rock station Virgin 1215 is campaigning for the new section of the FM waveband on 105-108 MHz to be handed to the bearded one rather than to the hundreds of small community radio stations around the country.

To support the bid Virgin launched a petition which has been endlessly plugged on air by the station and in Virgin record shops. The unprecedented broadcast campaign features soundbites apparently in support of giving the waveband to Virgin — including one from Neil Kinnock, who has asked for it to be withdrawn as he supports the community radio option.

But the Radio Authority has rejected a complaint from the Community Radio Association that Virgin's on-air campaign breaches its responsibility to be impartial on matters of public policy. According to the authority, the future of the waveband is out for public consultation so it is not yet a matter of public *policy*.

Virgin can thus say what it likes to influence the authority's decision. Once Branson has won and Virgin has its FM licence, it will have to shut up. Sounds reasonable, no?

HACKWATCH: Paul Johnson

"I CRAVE excitement," Paul Johnson wrote in the *Spectator* last September. "What I cannot bear is humbug." This suggests a self-loathing unusual even in the Street of Shame: for Loonybins Johnson is himself a great gobstopper of a humbug.

In the *Spectator*, which is openly hostile to the government, he savages Major as a dunderhead who ought to resign at once. Yet in his other main outlet, the *Daily Mail*, which is more sympathetic to Major, he insists that the PM must be given another chance. He worships Margaret Thatcher, whose main selling point was her belief in meritocracy; yet he is reduced to a state of cringing deference at the sight of a hereditary peer.

He deplores gossip and refuses to speak to anyone who works for a diary column, even "Peterborough" in the *Torygraph*. Yet he is himself an avid consumer and retailer of gossip; two of his books, *The Oxford Book of Political Anecdotes* and *Intellectuals*, are full of tittle-tattle about people's private lives. In *Intellectuals* he condemned Karl Marx for being a heavy boozer; yet Johnson himself is a famous drunk. He rails against adultery, and yet...

Alas, there we must stop. Paul Johnson has been married to his long-suffering wife, Marigold, for many years and it is clearly unthinkable that he might one day be found in bed with, say, a prostitute. Just as well: if he *were* ever to be exposed as an adulterer, the humbug would be so huge that even he might choke on it.

Still, there are already quite enough bonbons for us to chew on. Here is an assortment:

21 August 1993 (*Spectator*): "If I were asked to name the most delectable house in Britain, I would pick Eilean Agas." It has two things to recommend it: plenty of toffs ("the last dowager to live there, Laura Lovat, was the daughter of Lord Ribblesdale...") and a connection with his old chum Lady Antonia Fraser, who wrote "her celebrated *Mary Queen of Scots*" there.

28 August (*Spectator*): "The Tories have missed the chance to stage an August coup, rid themselves of John Major, and set the party back on the road to recovery. Their failure stems from the central weakness of Conservatism today: its lack of a ruling establishment." By which, of course, he means toffs: "The heads of the Cecil, Cavendish and Stanley families are out of politics," he laments.

2 October (*Spectator*): "A prime minister needs authority and Major has none... The Tories must put him out of his misery."

13 October (*Daily Mail*): The ever-versatile hack turns out a leader-page article on the subject of... rain. Inevitably, he quotes Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* about mercy dropping like the gentle rain from heaven.

20 November (*Daily Mail*): As a new TV series looks at legendary generals of history, "a top *Mail* writer" — viz Loonybins — offers his twopennyworth, quoting "that genius of the stern soundbite", the Duke of Wellington: "Publish and be damned... Up Guards and at them again!" etc.

19 November (*Daily Mail*): Noting Ted Heath's "churlishness towards the government", Johnson rushes to the prime minister's defence: "His cry of 'back to basics' suggests his heart, and his head, are in the right places. It shows that he, unlike Ted Heath, has the true Conservative instinct. It indicates that he may still prove himself a worthy leader..."

16 December (*Daily Mail*): Further praise for the PM. "John Major was right to make the first significant move since Margaret Thatcher's Anglo-Irish declaration of 1985 to bring the peace process out into the open." The Downing Street declaration on Northern Ireland "is a serious and sophisticated effort".

1 January 1994 (*Spectator*): A scathing attack on John Major, whose government is "Janus-faced and brazen, slippery and underhand, a dismaying blend of incompetence and low cunning, doomed to end in shame and recrimination..."

6 January (*Daily Mail*): The downfall of Tim Yeo gives Johnson the opportunity to deliver a stern moral lecture on the "irresistible march of sexual promiscuity". He concludes that "adultery is wrong and should be punished".

8 January (*Spectator*): "I spent the New Year in the Highlands, as I often do." Naturally, he has been mingling with the best sort of Highlander. In one grand house, he was "privileged" to be shown a portrait of the 2nd Earl of Moray, "which is normally kept behind wooden curtains".

10 January (*Daily Mail*): Some "forthright advice" for Mr Major from "one of Britain's top political commentators." It is conspicuously different from the advice Johnson has been dispensing in the *Spectator*. "Don't be afraid. Pay no attention to the cynics and sneerers," he urges. "So go to it, John, and you can be sure that, if you do, you will have not just all the party loyalists behind you but the vast majority of those of us who run or work for the media. We all want a better, sounder, healthier Britain, and there is still time for you to show you know how to create it."

12 January (*Daily Mail*): Johnson's hobnobbing with Highland toffs comes in useful for a piece about the Duchess of Kent's conversion to Roman Catholicism. "In Scotland recently I heard of various leading aristocratic families which are moving towards Rome."

22 January (*Spectator*): "Last autumn I urged the Tory bigwigs, if there are such people these days, to dump John Major before Christmas. They failed to take my advice... How long will the party go on with this hopeless man before the penny drops in its thick head?" (Clearly their mistake was to heed the *Daily Mail*'s top commentator and give Major the benefit of the doubt.) The last straw is the resignation of the Earl of Caithness, which "removed from the government one of the few figures who appeared... to give it respectability". Given that Caithness's ministerial record was not particularly distinguished, what has he done to earn such praise? Simple: he is a hereditary peer.

27 January (*Daily Mail*): Prince Charles's coolness when threatened by a man with a pistol reminds Johnson of other great aristocratic heroes — such as, surprise surprise, the Duke of Wellington.

29 January (*Spectator*): Kelvin Mackenzie's departure from the *Sun* elicits an adoring valediction, full of praise for Kelvin's "cheeky audacity" and "brash courage". Though some people criticise the gutter press, "personally, I am delighted that the country possesses a fine pack of tabloids to hound undesirables from office... So carry on the tabloids!"

3 February (*Daily Mail*): *Mail* readers with long memories will recall Johnson's column in December, congratulating John Major on his Anglo-Irish initiative. Presumably Johnson hopes that no *Mail* reader has a long memory — for today he attacks Major's policy on Ireland. "There are certain elementary things any senior British politician must know about Ireland. First, on no account meddle with it unless you absolutely have to... For a British Prime Minister to try to do an Ulster deal without the most minute preparation is like an amateur chess player taking on Boris Spassky. Yet that is exactly what John Major attempted."

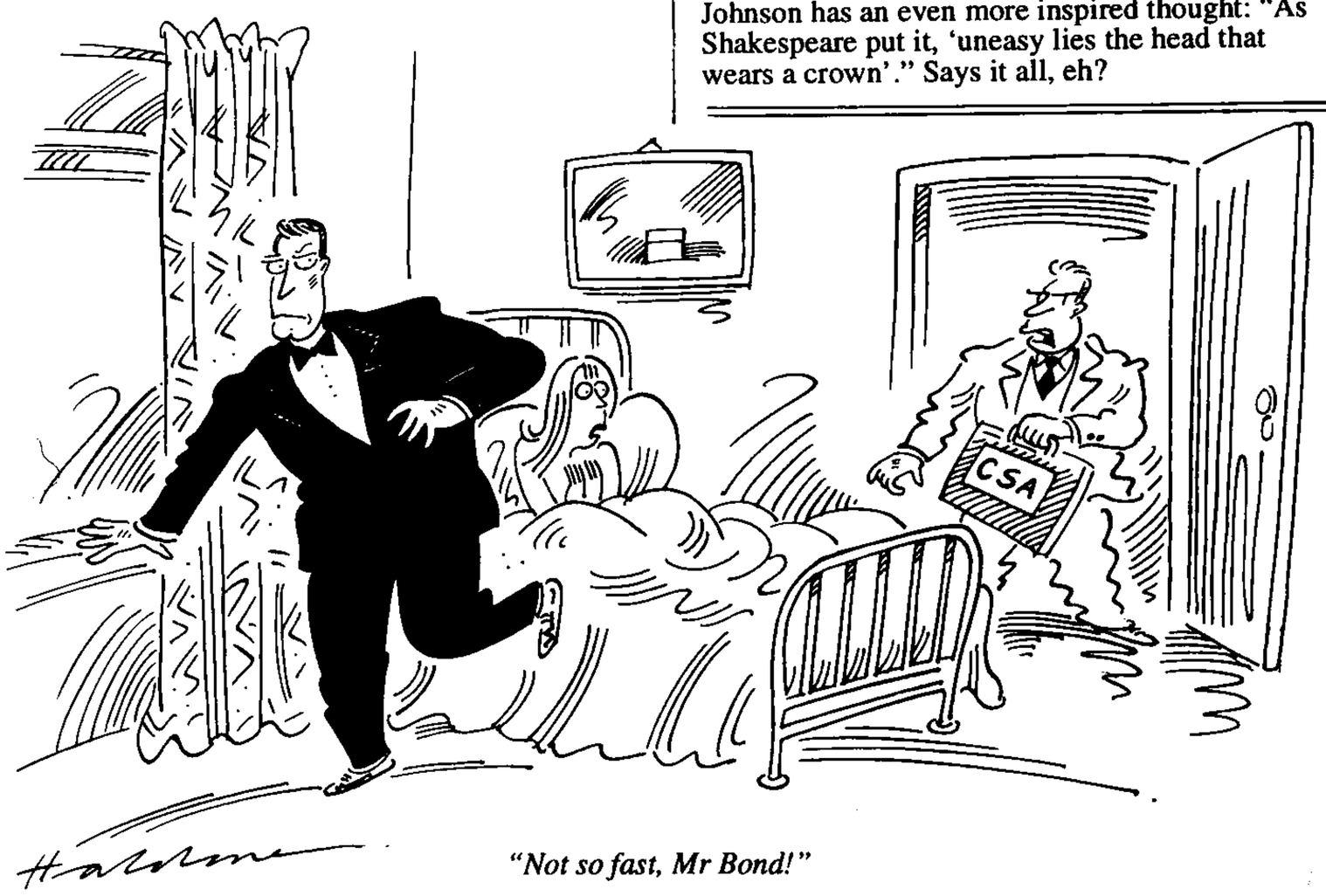
7 February (*Daily Mail*): Johnson regrets that Prince Charles turned down the governor-generalship of Australia. As ever, he has a clichéd Shakespearean quote to hand: "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune..." This, he thinks, "says it all".

19 February (*Daily Mail*): The forthcoming 50th anniversary of D-Day prompts Johnson to analyse the reasons for the operation's success. One was the "outstanding collection of brigade commanders, such as Brigadier Lord Lovat" — who was, though he neglects to mention it, an in-law of his old friend Lady Antonia Fraser.

26 February (*Spectator*): Less than a month after cheering on the tabloids pursuing sex scandals, Johnson now savages them for doing just that: "People high and low have their privacy trampled on by the jackboots and stiletto heels of the tabloid SS." This outburst is provoked by the revelation that the Duke of Richmond has jilted his mistress. Ever eager to ally himself with a toff, Johnson reveals that the Duke "is my age — we were in the same regiment... He spends most of his time doing what well-behaved Dukes do nowadays: running his estate in a paternal manner, being Lord Lieutenant of his county, chancellor of the local university, and so on." The Prime Minister ought to introduce a privacy law to prevent tabloid exposés; such a law, he notes approvingly, would also spare Major's "errant colleagues" from being "garrotted by the media". At the moment, any floozy can "flash her thighs to a sex-hungry MP, inveigle him into some kind of compromising behaviour, then trot off to a down-market tabloid... No conceivable public interest is served — quite the reverse — lives are ruined, and both newspaper and readers are degraded."

12 March (*Spectator*): "One of my possessions which gives me the greatest pleasure is a framed crudely printed handbill from the 1650s... It was given to me by Antonia Fraser when she was working on her life of Cromwell." After this customary plug for his chum Antonia, Johnson turns his attention to the less appetising figure of Edwina Currie, whom he condemns for writing "a salacious novel about goings-on at Westminster". (He has apparently forgotten that he himself once wrote a salacious novel about Westminster, complete with kinky sex and high-class prostitutes.) Currie, he continues, may be "the archetypal member of the present House", in all its "venality and lewdness", though there are many other candidates for the distinction: "David Mellor, Michael Mates, Tim Yeo, Hartley Booth, the five-mistress transport minister Steven Norris..." If we had the privacy law which he so ardently desires, how would he or we ever know about these scandals? Answer comes there none.

17 March (*Daily Mail*): Following Prince Charles's interview on *Newsnight*, the top commentator searches his book of quotations for an appropriate line: "He should remember the words of the Iron Duke of Wellington..." But then Johnson has an even more inspired thought: "As Shakespeare put it, 'uneasy lies the head that wears a crown'." Says it all, eh?



"Not so fast, Mr Bond!"

DOING THE ROUNDS

CONSULTANTS at Luton and Dunstable NHS trust have passed a 49-1 vote of no confidence in the hospital management. Why?

The vote follows discovery of a bugging device in the office telephone of consultant radiologist John Spencer — a fierce opponent of management plans to cut the number of medical directorates at the hospital from ten to four.

Dr Spencer, chief executive Averil Dongworth and director of corporate affairs Joan Lewis were all suspended from duty on 25 February pending an inquiry by the trust chairman... who then reinstated them all on 28 February after "admonishing" Mrs Dongworth.

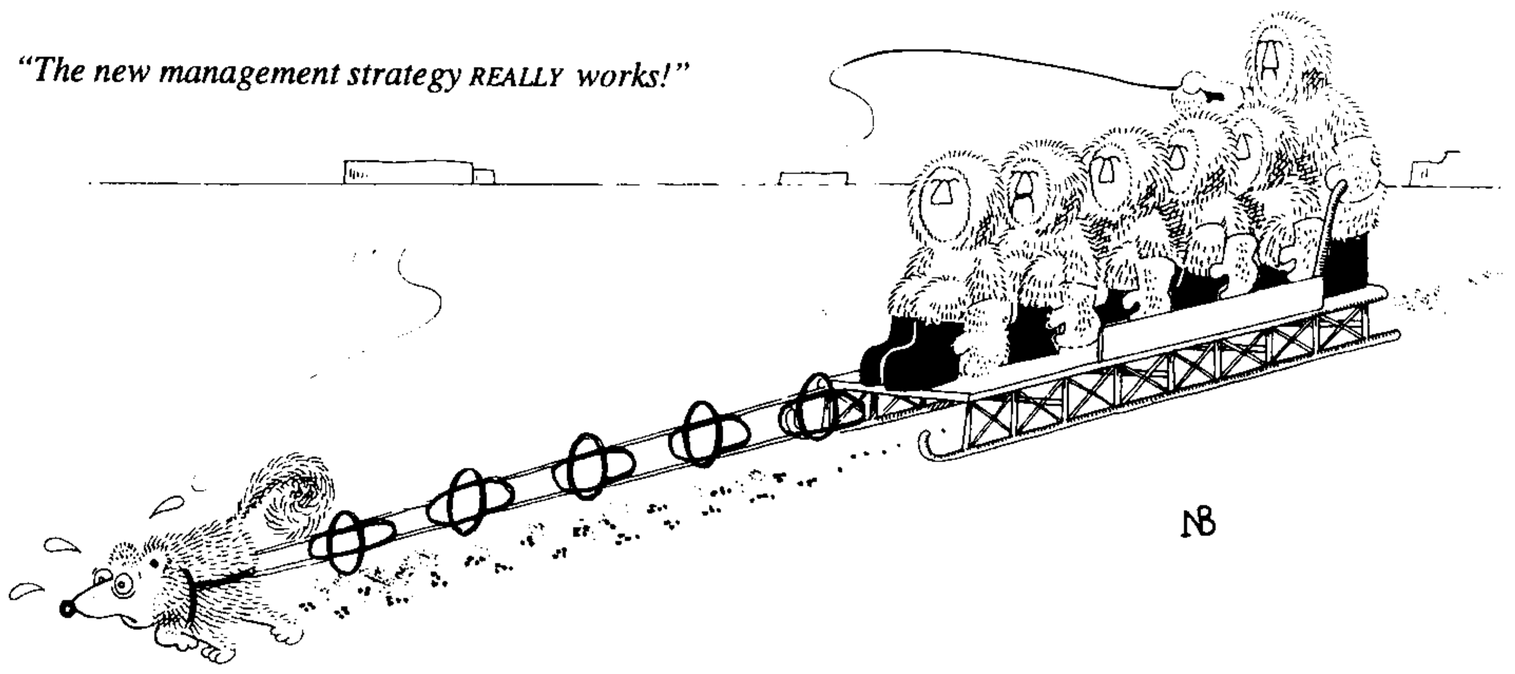
Dr Spencer took early retirement. Staff at the hospital also have to contend with gagging clauses in their contracts which forbid them speaking to the press.

● **CARSTAIRS secure hospital** in **Lanark** has become the first UK hospital to receive a top British Standards Institute award. As quality assurance manager Richard Lloyd put it: "The award means we have introduced major improvements to public safety and psychiatric care in secure environment." Days later, two prisoners kicked open the rear doors of a minibus transferring them between the east and west wings and escaped. The management then failed to sound an alarm to alert local residents of the escape, prompting 100 of them to complain of their "complete lack of confidence in the hospital management".

● ANTHONY SIEGAL, a patient at **London's King's college hospital trust**, received a letter on 17 February from consultant surgeon John A Rennie MS FRCS about his proposed operation: "Please be sure to check with whoever is doing the surgery that the appropriate procedure is being performed."

The letter was posted two days after he had had the operation, which was under a general anaesthetic. Poor Mr Siegal was in no position to supervise it. The surgeon responsible cheerily assured Mr Siegal there would be no postoperative pain as the polyp was in an area which is not sensitive. Strange that he had to return to casualty that evening to have the dressing changed and he is still taking painkillers more than a month later.

"The new management strategy REALLY works!"



EMBARRASSING STATISTICS

★ The current top three counties for overspent fundholding GPs are **Oxford** (£490,000), **Leicestershire** (£250,000) and **Lancashire** (£195,000). They will be bailed out by the department of health.

★ In London, the number of GPs has fallen by 2 percent since 1990, coinciding with a 38 percent rise in FHSA managers.

★ The amount the DoH spends on hospitality (currently £579 a day) is also rising — by 74 percent since the reforms were introduced.

★ Two million people are now waiting for NHS treatment, with some waiting three and a half years for an initial appointment.

● A DRUG company representative from Ciba Pharmaceuticals has been dismissed after teaming up with a *News of the World* reporter to try to tempt GPs into accepting financial bribes. As Ciba's head of policy Gwen Parr put it: " We are deeply distressed that one of our employees should have behaved in this way."

● **MERTON, Sutton and Wandsworth FHSA** has failed to recall 3,860 women for further tests after their cervical smears proved abnormal or unreadable because their names weren't entered on the computer properly.

● TWO doctors from **East Grinstead's Queen Victoria hospital** asked for advice on burns treatment from specialists at **Central Middlesex hospital trust** to be told that a two-hour chat would cost £300. Meanwhile, David Hirst, chief executive of the £1.5 million indebted **North Middlesex hospital**, warned staff of widespread cuts saying: "In times of extreme need, governments declared martial law." A few days later, he resigned.

● **LONDON's Great Ormond Street hospital**, one of the few to be untouched by the Tomlinson report, has come under threat from a **North East Thames RHA** proposal to merge it with **University College London hospitals (UCLH)**. One in six consultant posts are already set to vanish by April at UCLH in a bid to save £7.5 million. Nurses campaigning against the closure of **Guy's hospital** were ordered not to wear uniforms by the trust management. Many did but were not disciplined, presumably because they will soon be losing their jobs anyway.

● JUNIOR doctors at **Southampton general hospital** have been refused study leave since last September because the hospital has no money. And **University of London** medical students have petitioned Downing Street for an increase in grants. In 1992/3, the average doctor graduated with debts of £5,000 and many now qualify at least £10,000 in the red.

M.D.

CONSTRUCTION NEWS

THE police officers and accountants who are trying to discover how Pergau Dam builders Balfour Beatty won a £55 million building project at Preston — against the recommendations of the town clerk and independent consultants — will want to know more about a meeting held in 1982 in the bedroom of a London hotel.

How, they might wonder, did Owen Oyston — an estate agent who was neither a councillor nor an official nor even a resident of the town of Preston — come to be negotiating the future of 110 acres of the town's dockland in his penthouse suite at the Hilton Hotel in Park Lane?

Balfour Beatty has admitted paying £125,000, for no apparent gain, into an abortive seaside flat-building project run by Frank McGrath, former deputy Labour leader on Preston council, seven years after his party had reversed policy and awarded Balfour Beatty a reconstruction project for Preston Dock. The Riversway scheme had originally been proposed by Balfour Beatty's rival, John Mowlem.

Still "sore" at the way the Mowlem project was given to Balfour Beatty, Michael Day, then managing director of Mowlem Property Developments, last month showed *Construction Weekly* the text of a seven-page statement he made to police in 1991. What *Construction Weekly* has yet to report is Day's comments on Oyston's involvement.

Mowlem's scheme had been picked as the best from 10 rival bids examined by the international consultants Debenham Tewson and Chinnocks, and in July 1982 Preston borough council voted to negotiate exclusively with Mowlem. But in September, Day was told by a Debenham partner, Colin Vaughan, that Lancashire county council's own development firm, Lancashire Enterprises Ltd, in which Oyston was an unpaid director, wanted to invest £4 million in the scheme and turn it into a tripartite company. Day found this "totally unacceptable" since Mowlem "would lose its control of any capital it put into the scheme".

In December, according to Day's statement to Inspector Knacker, he was invited by Colin Vaughan to a meeting with Oyston at the Hilton Hotel. Day says that he left the meeting "very concerned" at certain propositions which were put to him by the "socialist tycoon". "I told Mr Oyston that we could not be a party to this."

Colin Vaughan too has told the *Eye* that he found the meeting "disturbing". He cannot remember Oyston making the suggestions alleged by Day, "but I found it odd to be discussing control in the terms used by Owen Oyston".

In 1983, Preston's ruling Labour group, opposed by Tories and Liberals, voted to scrap the Mowlem deal, delaying construction by two years. The consultants resigned and the officers of the council lodged a record of their own opposition to the new policy. Five months later, Balfour Beatty came forward as unopposed developer.

Last December, the attorney-general, Sir Nicholas Lyell, refused to allow the crown prosecution service (CPS) to charge Frank McGrath with corruptly receiving money from Balfour Beatty.

TAKE THAT'S European tour has arrived in Berlin. Inside the hotel, Britain's most successful group are about to do their 30th interview of the day. This tour appears to have been planned with all the tactical skills of Rommel and his Desert Rats — it's not so much a tour as an invasion.

Paula Yates, Daily Express

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

THE Arts Council, clearly not satisfied with the chaos created by the recent Hoffman inquiry, is determined to put London orchestras through more agony with Hoffman II.

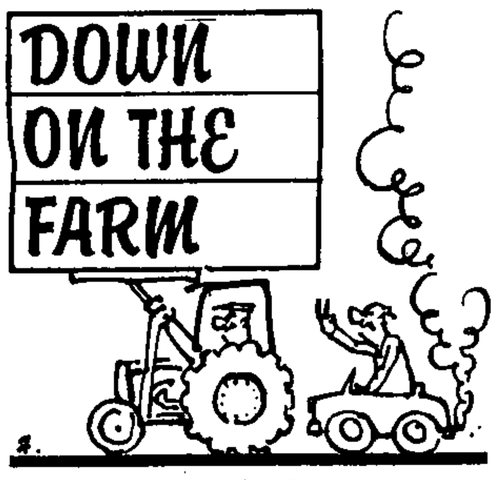
On the day Anthony Everitt announced his resignation last month, the Philharmonia's md David Whelton, and the LPO's Christopher Lawrence, were summoned without notice to Great Peter Street. The purpose of the meeting was to resurrect the BBC/Arts Council review of orchestras, abandoned in July 1993 when Hoffman was set up.

Also at the meeting, for which there was no agenda and no minute was taken, were Ken Baird, still director of music at the council for a few weeks; Anthony Everitt, director-general; Peter Gummer, council member and brother of the now saintly catholic John; Clive Gillinson, LSO boss and chairman of the ABO; and Nicholas "Abominable" Snowman, supremo of the taxpayers' bottomless pit, the South Bank. The RPO was not invited; nor was the Barbican.

The chairman of Hoffman II — oops, the BBC/Arts Council review — is to be the one and only St John Gummer, brother of Peter who, coincidentally, chaired the meeting.

Snowman urged it to set aside the Hoffman report because it was full of inaccuracies (in fact all material sent was checked for accuracy by the parties concerned), because Hoffman's arguments were flawed and thus came to the wrong conclusions. But he would say that, wouldn't he? The report favoured the Philharmonia, not the LPO, and was especially critical of the South Bank's submission. The Philharmonia's fear now must be that Snowman will try repeating his ploy of rubbishing its reputation, which failed so dismally during Hoffman I.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'



with 'New Muckspreader'

LAST MONTH a small grain carrier, the Samir I, called into Milford Haven docks with fuel problems. The tugboat crew called out to assist the vessel was overpowered by the stench of ammonia, and was shocked to find that the load, far from being grain, was 1,200 cattle bound for Port Said in Egypt.

The appearance of the Samir revealed a new twist in the unsavoury business of live animal export. The cattle had been loaded a few days previously in the obscure Irish port of Greenore, not a stone's throw from the Northern Ireland border.

Live cattle export from the UK, including Northern Ireland, has of course been banned since the advent of BSE, leaving Eire and other canny Europhiles free to exploit the 80 pence per kilo subsidy paid for live exports to non-EC countries. This amounts to a munificent £400 per animal, paid to dealers, only £150 or so less than what they pay farmers to rear these 18-month-old animals.

So very lucrative is the trade that the Samir's load was worth nearly £½ million in subsidies. But Irish stocks have been so depleted by this subsidy grab that there is serious speculation as to where the cattle are coming from. In this context, the proximity of the Samir's starting point to the Northern Ireland border is not seen as a coincidence.

As for the fate of the cattle which so shocked Milford Haven's tugboatmen, despite the appalling conditions the Samir was allowed free passage out of UK waters by agriculture ministry officials, ignoring protests from the RSPCA.

Clearly, a minor thing like unspeakable cruelty to animals cannot be allowed to interfere with a trade which mad EC official Guy le Gras considers essential to mop up surplus EC production and reduce the beef mountain.

OVER the last few years, harassed UK poultrymen have suffered massive losses from disease as a result of ludicrous delays by the ministry of agriculture's veterinary medicines directorate (VMD) in licensing vaccines in this country, despite their being in widespread use elsewhere in the EC.

This has led to the absurdity of producers being able to purchase vaccinated chicks from countries like Holland, or even to send their own birds to the continent for vaccination, while not being able to use those same vaccines here.

Another insane anomaly has been the difference in charges between the various EC national authorities. While the UK extorts more than £1,300 on a "full cost recovery basis" for a licence application, the Dutch pull in a mere £140.

Fortunately our wise and sensitive officials in Europe are well aware of these little difficulties and are well advanced with plans to create a Europe-wide licensing agency called the Veterinary Medicines European Agency (VMEA).

To ensure fair treatment for all, the officials will abolish differences in charging, creating another brilliant example of "the level playing field" — by increasing charges for everybody to £40,000 per application. Is there no end to the benefits of membership of the glorious EC?

ONE little-known fact to emerge from the current debate on BSE (mad cow disease) is that there have been a number of well-documented instances of the human form of the disease (Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease, or CJD) occurring in life-long vegetarians. By no means can this tragic and incurable disease be attributed solely to meat-eating.

Neither can it be assumed that the current tiff between the German and UK agricultural ministries is necessarily motivated by a sudden concern for the health of the Germans — after all, only a mere 900 tonnes of British beef is exported annually to Germany.

More likely the "crisis" has been engineered by German officials, frustrated by the UK in a number of other agricultural issues. So far has the situation deteriorated that relations between UK agriculture minister Gillian Shephard and her counterpart in the republic have reached breaking point.

In an important election year, with Chancellor Helmut Kohl's grip on power as tenuous as John Major's, BSE has become an electoral plank on which the ever-so-sincere Deutschlanders can show concern for their citizens.

With our ministry of agriculture (aka the Maffia) in such disarray, no self-respecting German politician could resist having a go. After all, more than 7,500 cattle have succumbed to BSE since the 1988 feed ban, and several of the Maffia's own experimental herds have gone down, despite the cattle having been fed no artificial supplements. Who could miss such an easy target?

POLICE 5

SEVEN years after investigations began, heads have finally started to roll at Greater Manchester police over the Ged Corley affair, the force's biggest corruption saga.

Corley, a former PC, *Eye* readers will recall, was jailed for 17 years in 1989 for supplying weapons to criminals. He was soon released when it was found that he had been convicted on the word of dodgy supergrasses.

Now, after seven years and an inquiry which has cost taxpayers more than £2 million, former GMP chief superintendent Arthur Roberts, the officer who led the team investigating Corley, has received a nine-month suspended sentence for tampering with Corley's confidential defence papers before the 1989 trial.

"The Bill *was terrible last night*"

How did Roberts get hold of these key documents? As revealed in the *Eye* in 1991, and subsequently ignored in the press, Roberts was handed them by a member of his investigating team, DC Kevin Ryan, whose wife worked for Corley's solicitor.

After the trial, a third member of the Corley team, Inspector Peter Jackson, approached Roberts about a possible conspiracy by local villains to destabilise GMP involving false confessions and framed "evidence" against Corley. Jackson secretly taped Roberts (also revealed in the *Eye*) who rebuffed his concerns by referring revealingly to a colleague (Ryan), who had "shown us papers which could ruin him and his wife".

Eventually Jackson complained — as a private individual — about Corley's prosecution and the PC was released. Far from being rewarded for exposing an unsafe conviction, Jackson was himself charged, along with Roberts, for perjury, misconduct and perverting the course of justice.

Jackson was excused from standing trial alongside Roberts as he is recovering in a psychiatric hospital, his condition brought about, he claims, by his treatment in the affair. Jackson's story will now dissuade other police officers from coming forward to question similar rogue prosecutions.

Corley, who has admitted stealing cigarettes from a garage on his beat, supplying drugs and masterminding a series of frightening "initiation ceremonies" for new recruits (*Eyes passim*), is now enjoying a £230,000 windfall for spending 18 months in jail and is swanning round Manchester in a green Rolls-Royce.

The size of his compensation will doubtless ensure he doesn't "grass" to the press about corruption within GMP.

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

MAKES A CHANGE TO SEE PEOPLE USIN' THE VILLAGE SHOP AGAIN NOBBY!
CERTAINLY DOES GEORGE. PITY THE LOCALS DON'T BOTHER!
THEY SHOULD BE BLEEDIN' ASHAMED OF THEMSELVES!! THESE PEOPLE ARE FROM LONDON. BUT WHENEVER THEY'RE IN THE AREA THEY DON'T BOTHER WI' SUPERMARKETS. THEY COME STRAIGHT HERE!
LOOK!! JUST BLOODY SHURRUP!! AN' HAND OVER THE CASH!

Letters

Roman calendar

Sir,

I have just received issue 841 of PRIVATE "IDES" *which is delivered to my address in England.*

An excellent adaptation of Act III Scene ii but on looking at the top left hand corner of the cover page 1 I ask if I should:

— compliment PRIVATE EYE *on anticipating events by two years? Or*

— ask why it took 24 months to arrive and claim a refund.

Yours faithfully,
R. MICHAEL RAPAZZINI,
Milan.

Taff customer

Sir,

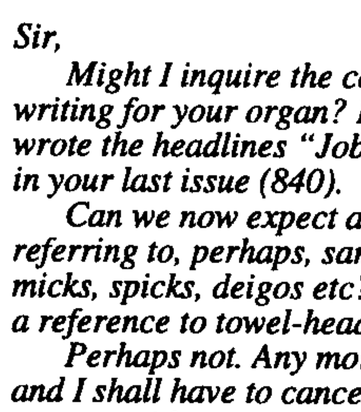
Might I inquire the cost of having Prince Philip writing for your organ? For surely it was he who wrote the headlines "Jobs for the Boyos/McBoyos" in your last issue (840).

Can we now expect a series of headlines referring to, perhaps, sambos, packies, slopes, micks, spicks, deigos etc? Or even more interesting a reference to towel-heads, spastics or faggots?

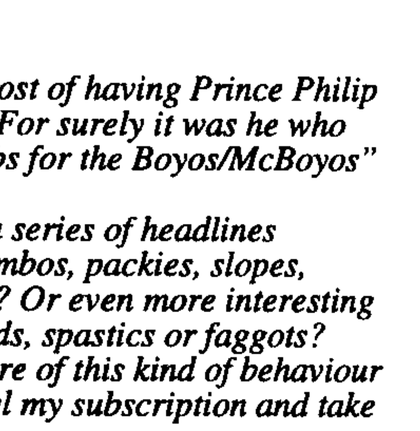
Perhaps not. Any more of this kind of behaviour and I shall have to cancel my subscription and take one out with PUNCH.

Yours,
P.B. MANSON,
Cwmbran, Gwent.

Lookalike



Neuman



Forgan

Sir,

Have any of your readers spotted the extraordinary resemblance between Liz "Knockout" Forgan, the talented and dynamic Birtian BBC radio supremo, and that loveable "Mad" character Alfred E. Neuman?

I was wondering, perchance, if they are related.

Yours etc,
C.T. ELLIS,
London SE8.

Reopening night

Sir,

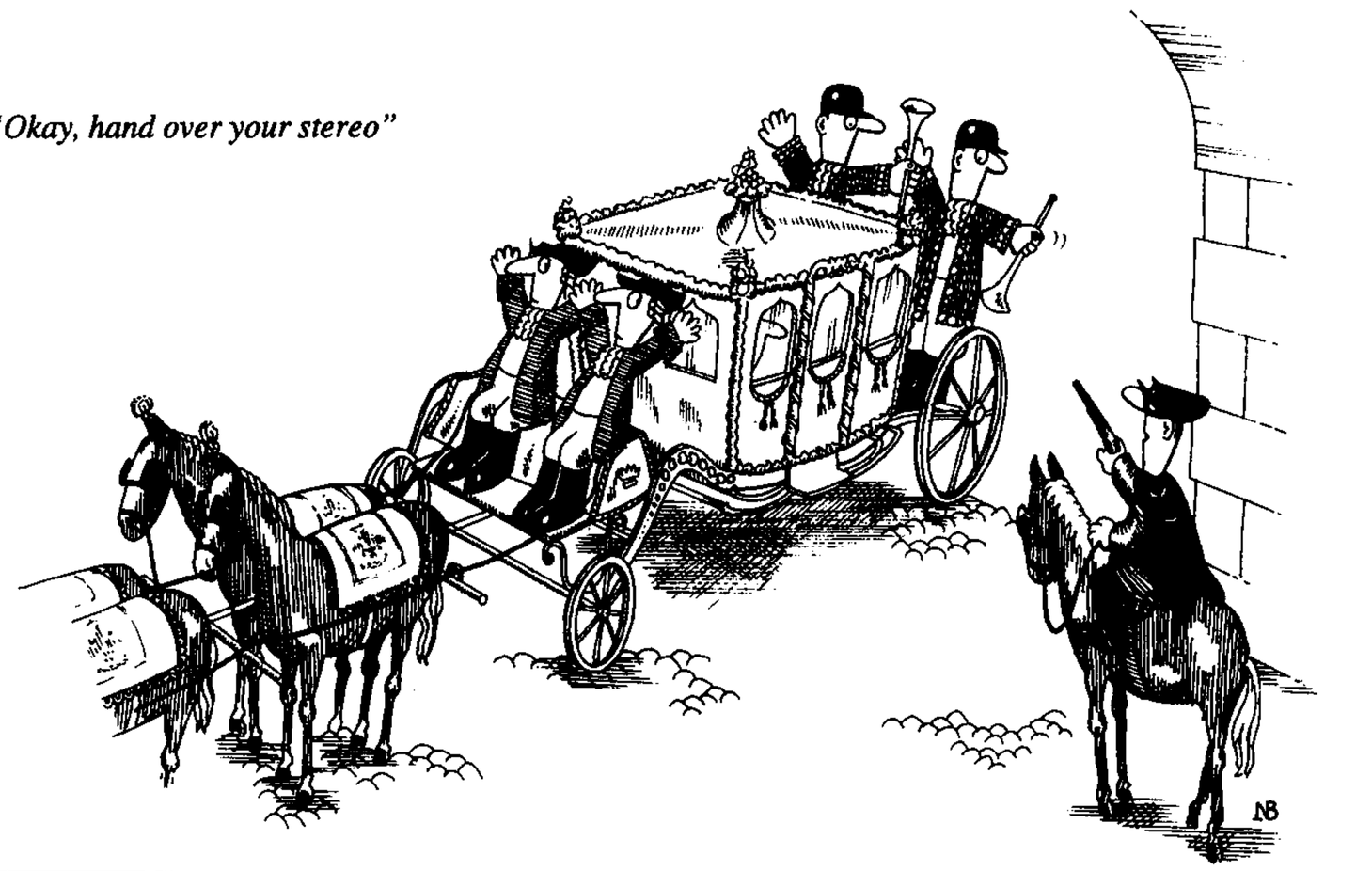
Your comments on Birmingham's Alexandra Theatre (Rotten Boroughs, 11 February) are wholly inaccurate.

The theatre is an independent company. A sub-committee, drawn from its Board of Directors, interviewed applicants for the job, took up references and chose John Curtin as chief executive. Birmingham City Council played no part in his recruitment.

You will be pleased to learn that the theatre will not be lost to developers. E&B productions, which runs the Theatre Royal in Lincoln and the York Opera House, has made a successful offer to take over the Alexandra and hope to reopen the theatre very shortly.

Yours sincerely,
COUNCILLOR BRYAN BIRD,
Deputy leader, Birmingham City Council.

"Okay, hand over your stereo"



Yorkshire bitter

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the similarity between the scene in the McDonalds TV ad where two young men jokingly engage in an exaggerated "cloth cap and clogs" Yorkshire type of conversation and the scene in novel "Billy Liar" by Keith Waterhouse where Billy and his friend Arthur engage in an almost identical conversation. Are they by any chance related?

The producers of the advert missed the chance to conclude with the slogan: "McDonalds — where there's muck there's brass." Too close to the truth, maybe?

Yours sincerely,
ALLAN MACKENZIE,
Livingston, West Lothian.

Affairs of the (lonely) heart

Sir,

I write asking you to reflect on your policy of accepting ads for your "Eye Love" and "Opening Lines" columns, in particular from married people advertising for partners for affairs.

I realise ads are a valuable source of revenue, but has anyone in your office ever thought about the unsuspecting wives and husbands of the advertisers?

Of course, there are always the ones who know, because the couples have agreed on an open relationship. But what of the ones who don't?

Have you ever thought of the desolation and feelings of hurt and betrayal that would be experienced by wife on discovering that the husband she loved was replying to these ads... or the feelings of a husband on discovering his wife was advertising for a lover...

Yes, the ones who want to cheat will always find a way — so, I hear you say, why not make some cash out of it!

But think for a moment, how you might feel if you were that husband or wife. I am one such wife and my torment on discovering has made think more than once of suicide.

Have a care for us — one day it might be you.

Yours faithfully,
DESPAIRING.

LUVVIES O·B·N

SPECIAL

Ms [Oprah] Winfrey said, "I sometimes feel you aren't a real person, Steven, but that God has loaned you to us," after watching a clip of herself in "The Color Purple", which Mr Spielberg directed. She also thanked him "for coming to our planet".

New York Times

Submitted by Richard Atkinson.

Diggery doing nicely

Sir,

*You are always "taking the piss" out of Rupert Murdoch and his companies. How about the flipside for a change — I am an ex-*SUNDAY TIMES *pensioner, and have just been informed my pension has been increased by 29 percent.*

My state pension has also been increased — by just over 1 percent.

Yours sincerely,
C.H. PIKE,
Norwich.

Tower of strength

Sir,

I refer to comments made by Piloti about St Peter's church tower in Battersea in his article on 11 February. In my view, Piloti's criticisms of the Reverend Wimshurst (note the spelling) are unfair and misplaced.

The situation as I understand it is this. The tower was declared a dangerous structure by Wandsworth Borough Council at the end of 1992. It was subsequently scaffolded by order of the district surveyor to catch falling brick pieces and the parish has since been charged £50 per day for the scaffolding.

I recently visited the tower, with three other architects. We were agreed that a full scaffolding was excessive in the circumstances and that the safety of the public could have been assured by less costly means.

However the cumulative costs of this scaffold now runs into tens of thousands of pounds. It is this cost, extending into the future for an indefinite period, that has placed Rev Wimshurst in the position where he has to consider every option, including demolition.

The council that has imposed this intolerable and unjustifiable financial burden on a poor inner city parish is the same one, I remind you, currently presiding over the destruction of Battersea Power Station.

I suggest to you therefore that the true home for comments about the tower is "Rotten Boroughs".

Yours sincerely,
KEITH GARNER,
London SW11.

Verse and verse

Sir,

Re: The olympic triumph of Torvill and Dean
Let's Face the Music and Dance
Certainly put the audience in a trance
But your Midland Bank poet was totally wrong
In crediting Cole Porter with this song.
Jayne and Chris created a rave,
But Irving Berlin would turn in his grave.

Yours faithfully,
M. WINN,
London N21.

I-SPY

Montreal

Submitted by Adam Steele. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Head girls

Sir,

So John Gummer — along with many others — has resigned from the Church of England over the planned ordination of women priests. But isn't there a glaring inconsistency in their arguments? Since 1952 the head of the Church of England has been a woman — the Queen is head of the Church. Both John Gummer and the other objectors have accepted this fact for many years. If the head of the Church can be a woman, why can't a priest?

Yours faithfully,
MARC HURSTFIELD,
Gravesend, Kent.

Forgotten boroughs

Sir,

I refer to your piece about Arthur Daley ("Daley for England Job") in 839. Just a slight erroneous matter — Arthur Daley is not a "south London businessman". He is a "north-west London businessman" as anyone who watches MINDER *with at least half an eye open should know.*

I realise, of course, that "south London" trips off the tongue more easily, particularly when one is thinking of villainy and slander. And although we must own up to Del Boy Trotter, we are not responsible for the likes of Mr Daley and his minders and wish to set the record straight.

Arthur's natural habitat is Harlesden, Willesden and North Acton. He has been spotted as far south as the "Ealing Fish Bar" on the Uxbridge Road but hardly ever south of the river. Therefore, he would hardly be likely to frequent Ladbrokes in Peckham, especially as there is no Ladbrokes in SE15. In fact, the vast majority of turf accountants in south-east London are run by E Coombes Ltd as the only last living girl from New Cross (recently vacated to Balham — please don't ask about it) can tell you.

Yours southernly,
SHARON WALTER,
London SW17.

Defecate...

Sir,

Stuart Millson (841) sounds like a bit of a Portakabin.

At least with the EYE *it's the reader who puts shit on the pages and not the editor.*

Yours,
RICHARD MORGAN,
Norwich.

...articles

Sir,

I would be obliged if Stuart Millson could tell us when blue was added to the flag of England (841) or is this just indicative of the research that goes into all his articles?

Yours faithfully,
DUNCAN W MALCOLM,
Waterside, by Kirkintilloch.

Battle of wits

Sir,

Am I the only person whose mind, upon viewing the "Then ...And Now" cartoon in the last issue was cast back to the glorious days of the "Battle for Britain"?

Bring it back immediately.

Regards,
ANDY TURNER,
Bolton, Lancs.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Suicide is a real threat to health in a modern society."
VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY, Radio 4
(Robin Fairbairns)

"All that remains is for a few dots and commas to be crossed and I'll be back at the club where my career began."
MITCHELL THOMAS
(S. Akhurst)

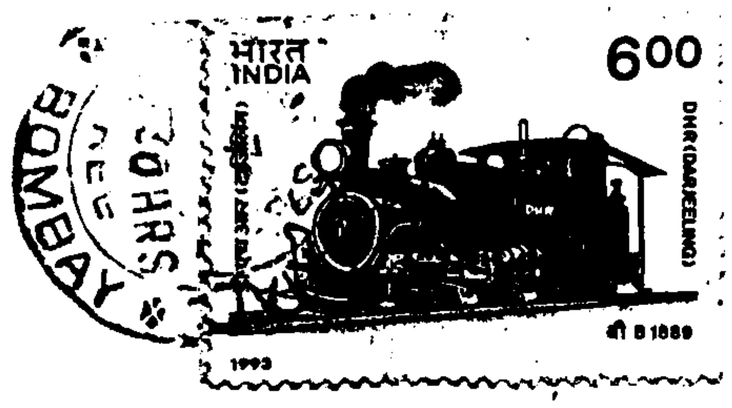
"I'd say he is the best in Europe, if you put me on the fence."
BOBBY ROBSON, ITV
(B. Fenton)

"It's important to allay the finger of responsibility at the door of parents."
JOHN PATTEN, Radio 4
(C.N. Muchmore)

Interviewer: *The top school in Britain is in the Scilly Isles. What does that tell us?*
Spokesman: *The top school in Britain is in the Scilly Isles.*
Radio 1
(Chris Chapman)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



Postcard from **India**

OUR prime minister, Narasimha Rao, is so ineffectual he makes your own John Major look like Action Man.

Until recently his office was literally knee deep in files awaiting his signature — until his staff decided to store the "sensitive" ones to be dealt with... later.

Even Rao's supporters accuse him of dodging decisions. A recent cartoon showed Rao confusing even Yama, the Hindu god of death, into postponing the inevitable. So it was no surprise that he made no mention during his recent visit to the UK of India's intention to buy 70 Hawk trainer jets, despite Major's high expectations. In his inimitable style, Rao said a decision would be made. One day.

All Rao *has* done since assuming office as head of a minority government three years ago is shamelessly coerce, manipulate and reportedly bribe fence-sitting opposition MPs into supporting his government.

He also spent weeks defending himself against allegations of receiving a suitcase of 10 million rupees (£130,000) as a bribe from India's biggest securities scamster. Even though the allegation was somewhat disproved, sadly, few believe Rao to be innocent. Alas, so low is public perception of his integrity and that of most of his fellow politicians that he was berated for cheapening the PM's position — by accepting such a paltry sum!

Raising vacillation to an art form, crucial cabinet meetings are cancelled on flimsy grounds, and decisions to contain the civil war in the disputed northern province of Kashmir, where more than 8,000 people have so far died, are never taken. The result — in a country where more than 50 percent of 890 million people live below the poverty line — is that nothing ever happens.

... and from **Indonesia**

HAPPILY it's not all work, work, work for the military government of Indonesia, whose enthusiasm for developing trade links with British companies is matched only but its zeal for genocide.

The people of East Timor — 200,000 of whom have died since Indonesia "occupied" their country in 1975 — will be relieved to learn that Indonesia's elite has now discovered golf as a distraction from the toils of office.

Twelve new links were built here in 1993 and planning permission is being considered for 30 more. Sixty eight are already raking in big profits, which is very good news for President Suharto, whose family owns half of them.

And the profits *are* huge. Jack Nicklaus was paid US$1.5 million just to design the north course at Emerald One (the south course being designed by Arnold Palmer for a similar fee). Greg Norman collected $850,000 for designing a course on Batam.

Membership of the prestigious Pondok Indah course costs $75,000, and industrialists and government figures are queuing up to join. Membership tickets are traded like shares, soaring in value as demand increases.

Suharto, described by the Indonesian Human Rights Campaign, as "one of the world's most renowned mass murderers" is delighted. He can sometimes be seen swinging a club (a golf club) with the likes of the Sultan of Brunei, Ronald Reagan and Helmut Kohl.

Of course golf courses do take up space, and thousands of long-suffering farmers have had their lands and homes confiscated. But this does not seem to bother Haynono Isman, the youth and sports minister, who explained that the development of golf could be "an indication of improving people's welfare".

After all, dispossessed farmers can always retrain as caddies.

Prisoner: Shut up, fucking poofter. You poofter, thank you.

His Honour: You just keep quiet, we will have a word with you in a moment.

Prisoner: Fuck to you. All right, you poofter. All right, I fuck you. That is answer.

His Honour: It is said that you assaulted...

Prisoner: Fuck the English, fuck the colony, all right.

His Honour: If you don't shut up...

Prisoner: Fuck the judge too. That is not true.

His Honour: Do we assume this is a plea of not guilty?

Defence Lawyer: Yes, I think we can assume that.

Prisoner: I fuck you, answer you, stuff you, poofter. Is that enough for you answer?

His Honour: That is no answer, but I assume that the outrageous torrent of language from the accused is a plea of not guilty. Remanded for trial. Has someone been imprudent enough to grant a bail agreement?

Defence Lawyer: I hesitate to ask him.

Prisoner: Fuck you.

His Honour: Do you wish to ask for bail?

Prisoner: You ask yourself bail, poofter. Now ask me.

His Honour: I don't have to ask.

Prisoner: Fuck the bail, fuck Australia.

His Honour: I take it, then, you don't wish to seek bail.

Prisoner: Stuff that.

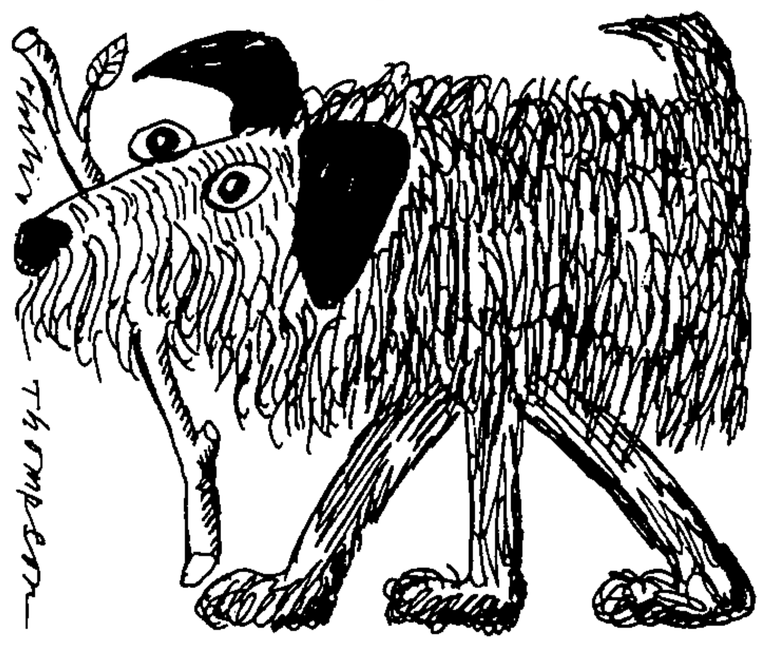
His Honour: No application for bail. The accused is remanded for trial in custody.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

Prisoner: Fucking bastard, poofter melon-arse.

(Transcript of interchange between Judge Roy Grubb and defendant Yusuf Biyikli at Adelaide Criminal Court, 5/5/93. Spotter Vitali Vitaliev)

—o—



Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

o "Goldie's always liked playing 'fetch' with sticks, so I guess this was second nature to him," Ross White told journalists outside his Melbourne home.

White was talking to reporters about his cross-bred terrier, whose left hind leg had been severed the night before by a passing train. "He must have been a bit shaken, but he picked the leg up in his mouth, hopped two kilometres home with it, barked once, dropped the leg, and collapsed in the doorway. The vet tried sewing it back on, but frankly, he made a balls of it. I assume the man was drunk. He sewed it onto his stomach. Even I know that's not where a dog's leg should go. It fell off this morning, and I'm not paying his bill. Still, Goldie's doing okay. We're thinking of changing his name to 'Tripod'." *(The Melbourne Age, 4/2/94. Spotter — Steve Hudson)*

—o—

o *"All I remember was Ms Fudge running towards me screaming 'Smoking kills!' and, next thing I knew, I was on a life-support machine in intensive care," John Turcotte told an Ontario court.*

Janice Fudge, 45, an anti-smoking vigilante, was charged with aggravated assault, after attacking Turcotte, 64, in the lobby of her apartment building. The prosecution explained what had happened: "Turcotte was smoking outside, when the superintendent beckoned him into the lobby. Seconds later, Ms Fudge began shouting 'Cigarettes can damage your health — here's how', hit him over the head with a copper tea trivet, pulled his entire shirt through the sleeve of his jacket, then repeatedly stabbed him with a carving knife."

As she was led away, Ms Fudge yelled at reporters: "I was a 40-a-day person. I've done very well without them. Do I look tense?" (Toronto Globe & Mail, 26/2/94. Spotter — Greg Turko)

ADVERTISEMENT

CLIFFORD PENSION SCHEMES*

*A member of Fibra and Lietro

More and more young women are planning a large tax-free sum to ensure they never have to work again.

The Clifford scheme is very simple. It requires only a brief affair with a middle-aged public figure, though obviously the more important he is the bigger your return!

Max Clifford will maximise your assets and will take care of all the arrangements. He will even write your life story in your very own words. All you have to do is put yourself about a bit.

"I have nothing but praise for the Clifford service. He turned me overnight from an unknown scrubber into a well-known scrubber."
Antonia di Scrubbe

Send now for more details and sign this form:

I am 38 but pretend to be 21 . . . . .
NAME . . . . . .
ADDRESS . . . . . .

CLIFFORD PENSION SCHEMES
Telegrams and Cables: Kissntel

NEW

BIT OF ACTION man

PIT your very own Chief of the Defence Staff against the deadly assault of Lady Buck™. Will he resist? No.

Comes complete with: Red Face, Resignation Letter, and Wife Standing By Him.

Price: **£175,000** to News of the World.

"Last time I come to one of his working lunches"

NEW FROM GNOME-TEL

To celebrate the 50th birthday of one of the world's greatest sopranos, Gnome Classics proudly presents

DAME KIRI SINGS...

Any Old Rubbish

Includes:

Roll Out The Barrel
Black Lace's Agadoo-Doo-Doo
(Push Pineapple Shake A Tree)
The Theme From Birds Of A Feather
Postman Pat
The Kwik-fit Jingle (You Can't Get Quicker Than A Kwik-Fit Fitter)
Boring, Boring Arsenal
Four and Twenty Virgins
(Came Down From Inverness)
Maggie Maggie Maggie Out, Out, Out
Born With A Smile On My Face
(©Stephanie de Sykes)
The Pearl and Dean Song
(Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa Pa etc)
I Know That My Redeemer Liveth
(Shurely shome mishtake? Strobes)
And many more

Send now to guarantee disappointment

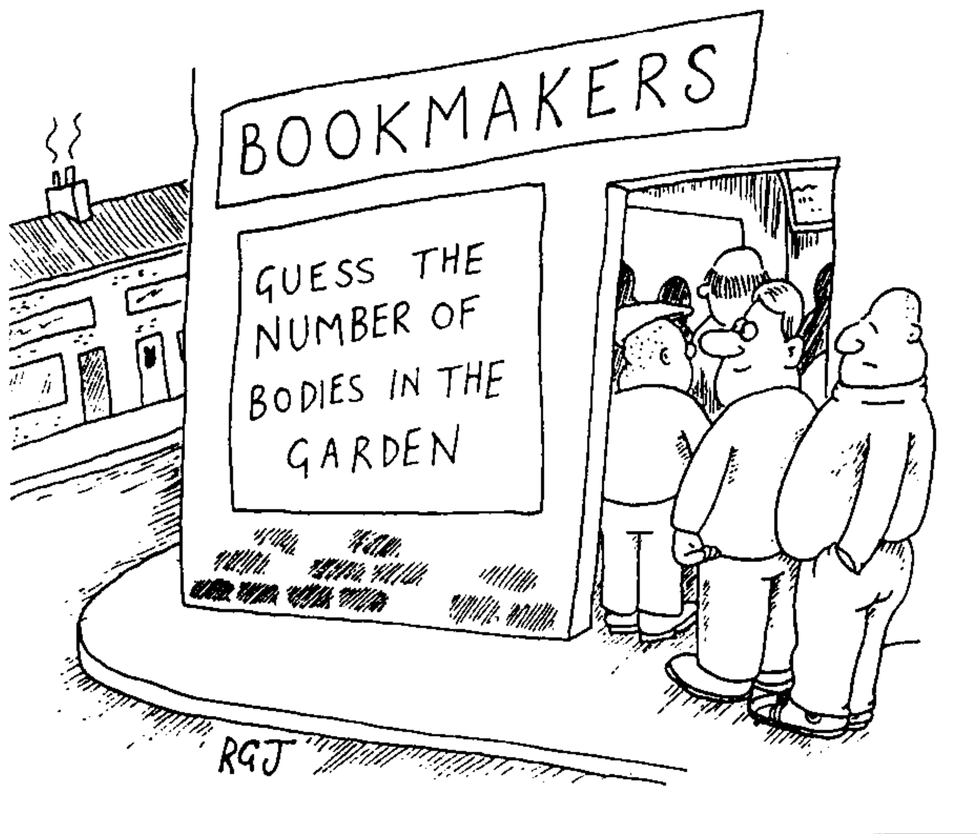
Gnome Kiri Offer, c/o Gnome-Tel, The South Bank, Bargs.

The unit will have a maximum of 20 places and will accept girls in the term after their third birthday to be put in the care of under trained nursery staff.

Manchester Evening News

8.00 Inspector Morse Repeat run of three crime dramas starring John Thaw as the Oxford police inspector. A private hospital is found murdered in his car. (R) (S)

Essex County Standard



BBC IN CRIMINAL PAYMENT ROW

by Our Media Staff **Glenda Lag**

THE BBC was today accused of breaking the conditions of its charter by giving money to "shady characters" in return for their services.

Criticism focused on the large sums payed to one John "The Knife" Birt, who is renowned for slashing jobs, vandalising networks and making dodgy tax returns.

Underworld Service

The accusation of handing over licence payers' money to people of dubious reputation was vigorously denied last night by BBC Chairman Marmaduke "The Twit" Hussey.

"There is nothing wrong with giving money to the likes of Johnny 'Producer's Choice' Birt or Liz 'Rolling News' Forgan", he said. "These sort of people are not going to work for the BBC for nothing. And anyway whatever they've done in the past is irrelevant. Their record in broadcasting may be criminal, but who cares? We're the BBC gang and anyone who doesn't like it will get a visit late at night from our new friends in the underworld, like Mad Frankie Fraser and Tony Lambrianu. Got it?! Now get out!"

John "Mission to Explain" Birt is 49.

If the horse will not cross the ditch at first, you must persevere until he dies.

Critters (Horse & animal magazine)

NEW FEATURE!

Why I Buy The Independent

by **Dave Montgomery**, 47, Canary Wharf

● I buy the Independent because it's cheap, it's losing circulation and I can probably have a lot of fun closing it down.

I don't like any of its features and, in particular, I don't like the Poem for Today and Michael Heath's cartoons.

I used to buy the Mirror, but I've done that and now it's the Independent's turn.

The thing that really appeals to me is annoying everyone by owning it and pretending I'm not going to sack people. Then giving them ten minutes to clear their desk.

Yes, I love the Independent. I love it to death. Which won't be long now.

New Bienvenida shock

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber

BABY PRODUCTION UNIT
CONGRATULATIONS MISS EVANGELINEKER, YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL NEW ADDITION TO YOUR LIFE!
waaa
OH DOCTOR IT'S GORGEOUS! WHAT IS IT?
Waaaa
I KNEW YOU'D LIKE IT! IT'S A JEAN-PAUL GAULTIER,.....WITH CHIFFON RIBBONS
MMMM....
Kerber

DUBLIN REJECTS ANGLO-IRISH DECLARATION

From Our Men In The Maze, **Tom and Gerry Adams**

LAST night, in what was widely interpreted as a slap in the face to John Major and his faltering Irish peace initiative, the Republican government of Ireland let off a further series of terrorists in a Dublin courtroom.

The incident confirmed fears that the Dublin government is playing for time and is not taking the Anglo-Irish Declaration seriously.

Although he signed the historic declaration, Mr Albert Reynolds demanded "clarification" of its contents, before flying to Washington where he was given an ecstatic welcome on a series of TV shows which mistook him for Ulster's Man of Peace, Gerry Adams.

YOUR PLANES TONIGHT

There aren't any *(courtesy G. Adams Spectacular Co.)*

The Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94. The Churching of Women or A Service Of Non-Gloating Over The Final Triumph Of The Forces Of Good (i.e. Women) Over Those Pathetic Men.

Madam President *(for it is she)*: Sisters and sisters. We have come here today not in any way to gloat but to give thanks to God for Her beneficence in granting utter humiliation for all those members of the Church who for so long have stood in our way.

All: Alleluia.

The Reading, From St Paul's Epistle To The Gummerians (Revised Version): "Let your women take over the Church, for they are closer to the Lord than any man. And if a woman wishes to speak in Church, then let her get on with it. And let the men keep silence. For they have nothing to say that we wish to hear."

Hymn No. 94 (from *Your 100 Non-Sexist Hymns For Today*): "She who would vicar be" (Mary Wesley).

President: We are in no way smug about our great victory.

All: Oh no, indeedy, we're not.

(All rush out to give interviews to nearest TV camera)

© Mother Carey's Chickens Come Home To Roost

Reprinted from Sunday Telegraph Important News Section

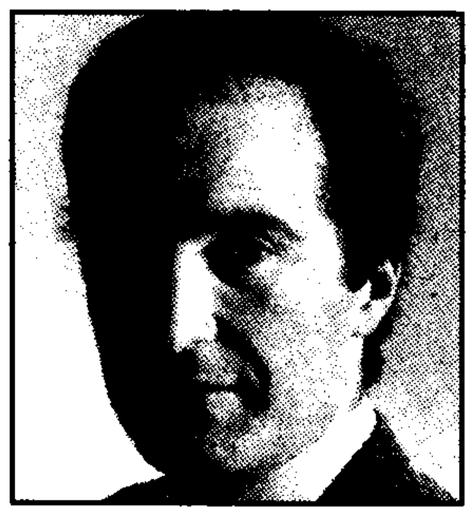
Why I am becoming a bore

by Sunday Telegraph Editor **Charles Boore**

FOR MANY years I have experienced a sense of dissatisfaction, of something missing in my life. I have tried to remain interesting but, as one gets older, one develops a new perspective and one can no long ignore certain promptings.

That is why today I have taken the momentous step to become a bore.

It was not an easy decision but I was greatly helped on my journey by distinguished bores like Lord Rees-Mogg, Paul Johnson and, especially, Sir Peregrine Worsthorne.



It was he who took me aside one day and said: "Charles, why don't you come over to us at the Garrick Club and have lunch?"

I now believe totally in the central doctrine of boredom *(continued page 94)*

A Cabbie writes

Every week a well-known taxi-driver is invited to give his views on an issue of topical importance.

This week — Should Child Minders Have The Right to Smack Children In Their Care? asks **Rod Burchill (Cab No 0898).**

I've got a little girl at home, right? Who's three, right? And if I caught someone so much as laying a finger on her, no matter who it was — childminder nor nuffink — know what I'd do to them? I'll tell you straight, guv. I'd string 'em up, right? It's the only language they understand. That Virginia Bottomley, right? It's all down to her innit? She started it. What she needs is a good punch in the mouth. That'd shut her up. Shame about LBC closing down, innit guv? I like that Littlejohn an' his programme. I had that Polly Toynbee in the back of the cab once.

NEXT WEEK: Should Frank Bruno have the right to hit elderly visiting Americans?

Let's Habla Español!

Bienvenida	Hello, big boy — are you very rich?
Muchas gracias	I find you very fascinating.
Buenos dias	Would you like a nice time?
Holà!	Is that the editor of the News of the World?
Hasta la vista	If you want the letters, you'll have to pay more.
Vaya con Dios	My friend Max will be in touch.
Adios, amigo	Goodbye, Big Boy.
Bienvenida	Hello, next big boy. Are you very rich?

(Continued p. 94)

TONIGHT'S TV

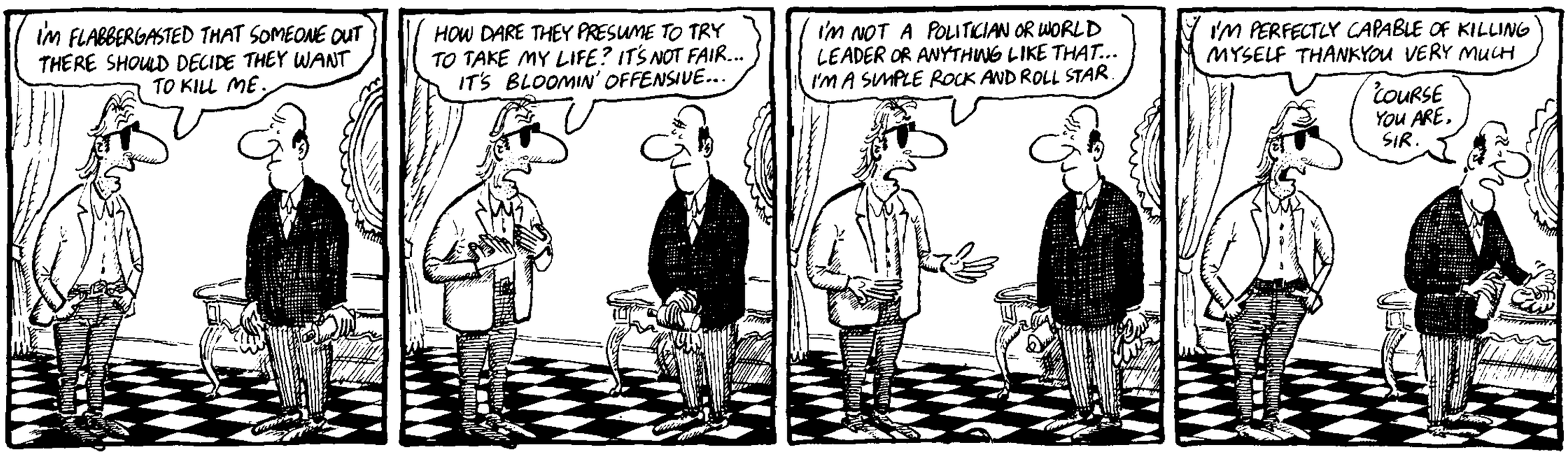
Sister Wendy's Grand Tour Of Soho

Announcer: Tonight Sister Wendy, the reclusive nun, introduces BBC viewers to the erotic art on display outside the Stripperama, Filth Street.

Sister Wendy: At first glance, this nude study would seem to say little more than "Come inside and see the show". But is it not at a deeper level a metaphor for the human condition? As the Bible says: "Naked we came into the world, and naked we shall go out of it." And notice how the artist has judiciously placed these stars over the sitter's nipples. This reminds us of the star in the East, which held out such a message of hope to the wandering travellers, like all these gentlemen around me here in the street in Soho. Next week I shall be in Madrid to see the famous Bienvenïda by Buck the Elder.

Great Bores Of Today.

"... his wig's amazing! and you don't mind somehow because he's such a nice bloke there's no side to him you get what you see how old is he? *Some Like It Hot* must be 30 or 40 years old and he was middle-aged then he was brilliant in that and when he does the Cary Grant voice it's so funny you know he said kissing Marilyn Monroe was like kissing Hitler brilliant when was *The Persuaders*? that was the 'fifties wasn't it? great theme tune anyway he's always kept that Brooklyn accent even when he's doing classics like *Spartacus* do you remember that scene with Laurence Olivier that everyone talks about? brilliant that must have been in the 'forties how old do you think he is? he must have had a facelift or two but he does look great you know he was married to Janet Leigh which is why their daughter is called Janet Leigh Curtis she must be getting on now *Fish Called Wanda* must have been what? in the 'seventies? he was in *Houdini* the other night I think it was a silent movie wasn't it? brilliant! I wonder what he's doing now..."


I'M FLABBERGASTED THAT SOMEONE OUT THERE SHOULD DECIDE THEY WANT TO KILL ME.
HOW DARE THEY PRESUME TO TRY TO TAKE MY LIFE? IT'S NOT FAIR... IT'S BLOOMIN' OFFENSIVE...
I'M NOT A POLITICIAN OR WORLD LEADER OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT... I'M A SIMPLE ROCK AND ROLL STAR.
I'M PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF KILLING MYSELF THANKYOU VERY MUCH
'COURSE YOU ARE, SIR.

INDIE MONSTER WAS HOAX

Eight Years On, Fleet Street's Most Closely Guarded Secret is Out

by Our Man At Loch Ness **Sean Day-Telegraph.**

THE GREATEST hoax of modern times was finally exposed last night, exclusively to the Sunday Telegraph.

"The Indie", long believed to be a serious newspaper, was actually nothing more than "a harmless prank", dreamed up over a few drinks by three obscure journalists, Andreas Whittam-Strobes, Stephen Glover and the other one whose name nobody can ever remember.

Said Strobes: "It was all a big joke. Thousands of people believed that they had seen what they thought was a new type of newspaper, floating on the Stock Exchange.

"But in fact it was just a few old bits of the Telegraph and the Guardian stuck together with glue.

"Everyone was taken in, especially the banks, who gave us piles of money. It was fun while it lasted, but I have to admit that enough is enough, and I now have enough money never to have to do this ever again."

THE SUNDAY TIMES

INFLIGHT

Why the mortar attacks failed

by **Lunchtime No Fuse**

BEHIND the mystery of the Heathrow mortars lies an extraordinary catalogue of mischance and ill-luck that only now can be told by the Sunday Times In-Flight Team. We can reveal that the world's busiest airport narrowly missed disaster due to the following remarkable coincidences.

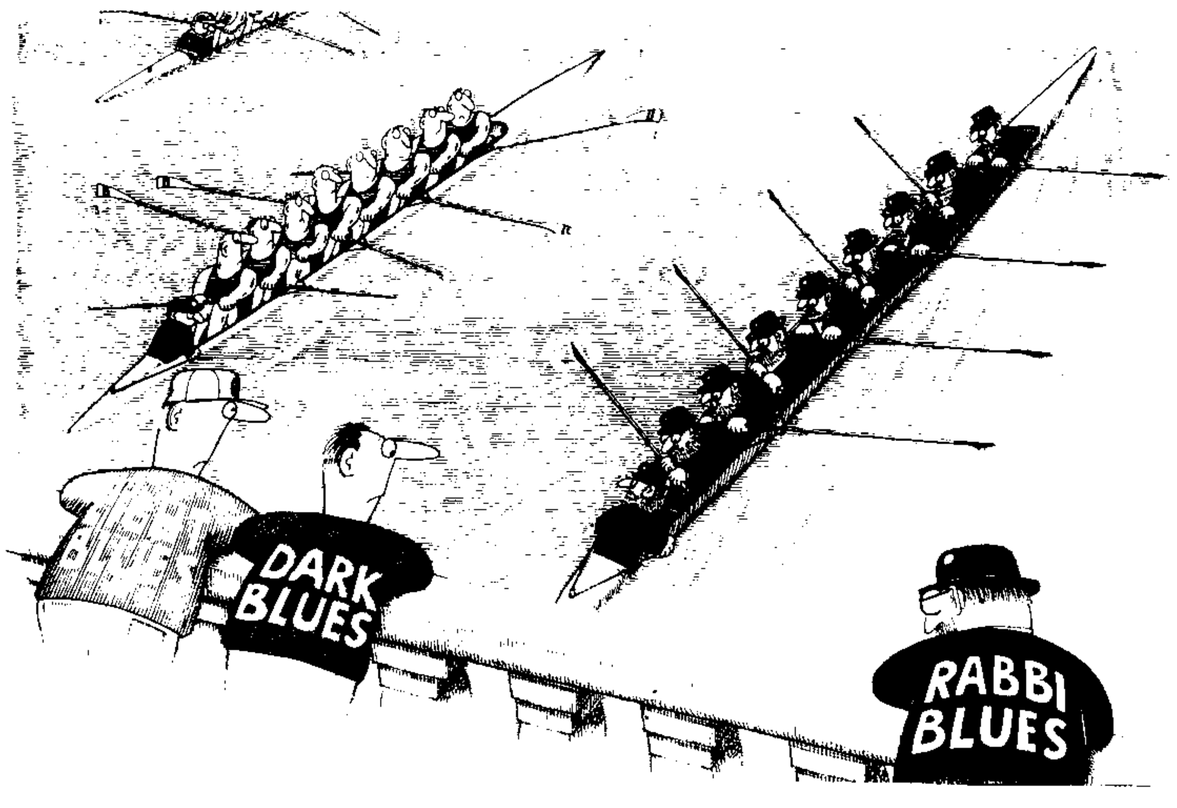
● The first set of mortars were launched succesfully but on reaching Heathrow got caught in a stack above the airport and were put in a holding pattern. By the time they touched down the fuses were worn out and useless for anything.

● The second wave of mortars were launched but due to the runway being closed were diverted to Stanstead. Their fuses however arrived in Manchester the next day and by then it was too late.

● The third wave were the subject of a dirty tricks campaign with BA offering to fly the fuses more cheaply to wherever they were going. The are still believed to be trying to get an upgrade at the check-in desk.

Mortar Bored

Meanwhile, customs have begun an enquiry into why mortars were allowed near Heathrow without being put in a crate marked "machine tools" and exported to Iraq *(continued page 94)*.



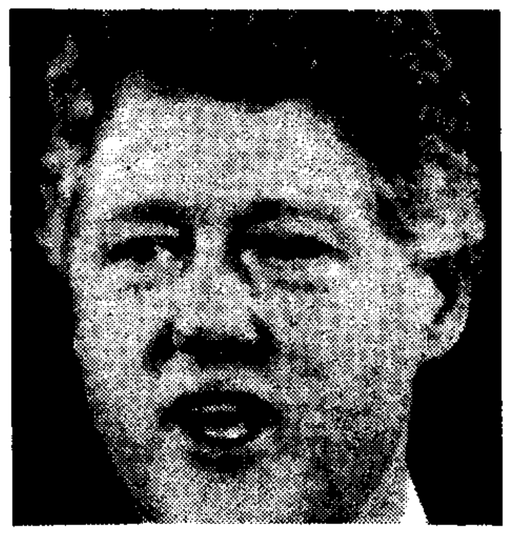
Your Cut Out 'n' Keep Guide to the Scandal That's Rocking America

Who are the Main Players in THE WHITEWATER AFFAIR?

Jefferson B. Clintstone, 47th president of the USA. Minor political figure, only important in relation to **Hillary Roddam Clintstone**, 1st Lady Macbeth and prominent Arkansas lawyer.

Her law firm Roddam and Shaftem were involved in the early Eighties in a failed savings and loan scheme, sponsored by the First City Bank of Little Rock Guaranty Trust.

Her partner was **Hiram B. Bubblegum**, until yesterday the Second Assistant Attorney General of the USA. Hubble Telescope III resigned after allegations that he was connected to **Vincent Foster Van Gogh**, whose mysterious "suicide" 100 years ago in Arles Cemetry is now believed to have been murder, possibly by **Paul J. Gauguin**, an Arkansas state trooper, who allegedly procured women for the president, but last September fled to Tahiti, allegedly to escape death threats



from **Kellogg P. Cornflakes**, a long time Clintstone aide, who has been accused of shredding huge piles of wheat *(surely 'documents'? Ed)* concerning the failure of his Arkansas-based breakfast food empire, which retained the services of **Mrs Mary Whitewater**, Chairman of the National Viewers and Listeners Rifle Association, which in 1992 backed Clintstone's bid for the presidency. *(Where does Whitewater come in? Ed.) (Who cares? Everyone else.)*

Wedding of the Century

How They Are Related

Paul Gascoigne

Gascoigne d'Ascoigne, the 1st Duke of Gascony

Sir Bamber de Gascoigne

Sir Gascoigne Pees

Sir Pizza de Gazza

Sir Gazza di Lazio

Sir Gizza de Job

Sir Gazza di Lager

Paul Daniels

Sheryl Kyle

Ned Sheryl

Kylie Minogue

Sonny and Sheryl

Kylie of Lochalsh

The Mull of Kintyre

Croft's Original Sheryl

Sherry Wogan

Sherry Venables

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

I was very pleased to see Lord Hailsham on Panorama being interviewed about the Matrix-Churchill business. At last someone has talked some sense about this very minor and unimportant crisis which could bring down my government. Lord Hailsham said that the whole thing should be left to the lawyers to sort out, except for Lord Justice Scott, who, as he said, obviously knows nothing about the law, since he keeps on having to ask everyone what the truth is. Lord Hailsham also pointed out, quite correctly in my judgement, that Mr Heseltine is not a lawyer, and therefore does not know what he's is talking about. Mr Heseltine said that there had been a cover up, and that he was the only minister who was innocent. What rubbish. We were all in the cover-up together, although of course there wasn't one.

Tuesday

Mr Waldegrave has not inconsiderably blotted his copy book. He has made a speech saying that all politicians have to tell lies. To prove his point he told a lie about Mr Callaghan, who was a Labour prime minister in the days when there were Labour prime ministers. Luckily that cannot happen any more! Anyway it was very silly of Mr Waldegrave to admit that. It would have been much better if he had told a lie, and pretended that it was the truth.

Wednesday

The newspapers keep on saying that my great Irish peace initiative has failed, just because the IRA keeps on firing mortars at Heathrow Airport. That has nothing to do with the initiative, which is still just as much on the table as it ever was. It is now up to us to move forward, in the spirit of the declaration. If the men of violence do not want to be involved in the peace process, then we shall just have to achieve peace without them.

Thursday

My ex-friend Norma Lamont has made a bit of a fool of himself, I am sorry to say! He has been objecting to a very funny advertisement which my wife Norman and I have been watching every night on the television. We have even made a tape of it! It shows Mr Healey, who used to be Labour Chancellor (in the days when there used to be such things!) standing outside a Thresher's wine shop making a funny face. Norma is very upset that they did not hire him to do the advertisement, as he is an ex-chancellor and he needs the money. Mr Lamont cannot see that it is only meant to be a joke, and as I told my wife Norman, in politics you sometimes have to learn to put up with a joke. "Yes" my wife said, "the British public has put up with you for three years. They obviously have a great sense of humour." I did not find her remark in any measure amusing, I have to say.

Friday

At our Cabinet meeting this morning Mr Waldegrave had some more good news about the success of my great Citizens Charter initiative. Apparently we have now spent £5 billion on the new Charterline, which is much more than Mrs Thatcher ever did.

The statistics are as follows:

Calls regarding cones on motorways	874,000
Number of cones removed	2
Number of calls on other subjects	1
Cost per call	£710

"This shows," Mr Waldegrave said, "that the prime minister's Charter idea has been a great triumph."

"Is that another of your lies?" asked Mr Clarke, and many of the Cabinet began to laugh, which in my judgement was very unfair. "Cones are no laughing matter," I told them in my stern voice. "Perhaps," Mr Heseltine suggested, "we should be called the Cone-servative Party." I am beginning to see Mr Lamont's point. Some jokes are not funny at all, even if you have a sense of humour, which I certainly do, oh yes.

Saturday

My wife Norman and I were woken up very early this morning by a figure kneeling at the foot of our bed. He was dressed in a long black cloak and wore a funny hat with a bobble on it, like you see in the advertisements for Renault cars. "Forgive me, prime minister," he said, "for I have sinned". I then realised that it was Mr Gummer. Speaking in a low voice he said, "I want to make a confession. For many years I have supported our party's plans to build more and more roads and to run down public transport. But my eyes have now been opened and I have seen the light. I recognise that the motor car is a veritable instrument of Satan, like unto the women priests." I asked him to get up off his knees and to go home and lie down, as he was obviously not feeling very well.

Monday

I am in Sarajevo for what my press adviser Mr Meyer said would be a morale-boosting trip.

"Yes," I said. "It will cheer up the Yugoslavians to have a world leader such as myself coming to visit them."

"I hadn't thought of that," said Mr Meyer. "But it has certainly cheered up the people back home to have you out of the country."

.

Tuesday

I have now returned to England and it is good to be eating a proper English breakfast. In Yugoslavia no one had heard of Coco-Pops, let alone Pop-Tarts! Things are in no small measure extremely serious there, oh yes!

Mr Meyer tells me my mission was a great success. Apparently I did not say anything and had my photograph taken everywhere I went. This is apparently the mark of a true statesman. Unlike Mr Smith, for example, who never goes anywhere and has always got interesting things to say. The papers claim that he is going to be the next Prime Minister. "Rubbish," said my wife Norman loyally. "Michael Heseltine is."

Wednesday

At our Cabinet meeting, the Home Secretary Mr Howard came up with a brilliant new idea. Namely to introduce an old idea.

His new old idea is called "Stop and Search", which used to be called "The Sus Law", and he wants the police to use it right away.

"How successful was it before?" asked Mr Clarke, who I do not think is the best friend of Mr Howard. "Wasn't it a disaster?"

Mr Howard looked rather smug. "Yes," he said. "But that was because Mrs Thatcher was Prime Minister. Now John is our leader, everything will be different."

"Yes, this time it will be a *complete* disaster," said Mr Heseltine, who had clearly not been paying attention because he was doing his press-ups in the corner.

THE TEMPORA

36 BC

Why do they keep on doing it?

asks **Glendonia Slagga Maxima**,
Our Woman In The Forum

HE IS a happily married senior general with a brilliant career ahead of him. She is a slinky raven-haired temptress from the back-streets of Cairo.

What attraction could there possibly be? Yet once again a successful middle-aged man has been brought low by a woman half his age.

In recent days the ancient world has been rocked to its foundations as details have emerged of the steamy romance between General Mark Antony, 54, chief of the Roman Defence Staff, and foreign-born sex goddess Cleopatra, 22.

Tragic

Millions of papyrus-readers have rushed to snap up copies of the News of the Scrolls showing candid pictures of the voluptuous "queen of Cairo" posing in front of the pyramids with snakes draped round her intimate parts.

Cleopatra is no stranger to the world of scandal. She first achieved prominence when her name was linked with an elderly politician, Julius Caesar.

Said one insider: "She led him a merry dance, taking all his money and making him the laughing stock of Rome."

Sexual Actium

General Antony must have known about her background. Yet within only minutes of seeing her at a lavish barge-party on the Nile, he was obsessed.

The Tempora has obtained copies of love letters sent by the besotted general to his new mistress.There is no doubt that the letters show that a massive breach of security took place, and also that the general had a pathetic, schoolboyish line in dirty talk.

Recalling his first sight of her he wrote later:

The barge you sat in like a
burnished throne
Burned on the water. The poop
was beaten gold,
Purple the sails, and so
perfumed that
The winds were love sick
with them.

Pretty dismal stuff, most people would agree. But it gets worse. On another occasion he declared:

Age cannot wither you, nor
custom stale
Your infinite variety. Other
women cloy
The appetites they feed, but you
make hungry
Where most you satisfy.

To read these juvenile ravings is painful, embarrassing and extremely entertaining *(surely 'a black day for Rome'?).*

They can only be understood by reference to leading psychiatrist Dr Antonius Clarus. "This is a classic mid-life crisis," he explains. " Psychiatrists are familiar with this phenomenon, where a middle-aged man risks all for the excitement of an illicit affair with a sexually attractive young woman, who then sells it all to the papers."

But for the General's wife Octavia, who lives quietly in a secluded villa on the Appian Way, this is little comfort. For her the man she loved and trusted is now being hailed across the world, from Caledonia to Mesopotamia, as "the strumpet's fool".

ON OTHER PAGES

● Your Chariots Tonight p3 ● Are Togas Getting Shorter? *asks Conradus Niger* p14 ● Cur O Cur Rogat *Paulinus Johnsonius Arsolus* p6 ● I Predict Antony Will Be First Emperor *predicts Nigellus Prattus Dumpsterus* p12

VIRTUAL REALITY
BY CUTTER PERKINS & RGJ
IN THE FANTASY LEAGUE
WITH MY AMAZING FA VISION EVERYTHING LOOKS ROSY IN THE ENGLISH FOOTBALL GARDEN
IT CERTAINLY DOES, FACUP MAN!
VR
VR
MILLICHIP
KELLY
WRIT
INVOICE PAY: EL TEL
INVOICE
WRIT
IT'S HELL-TEL!
WE'RE THE NEW SQUAD YOU'LL BE WORKING WITH
I'LL TAKE EACH WRIT AS IT COMES
SERIOUS FRAUD SQUAD
HE LIKES TO PLAY IT WIDE, SO WE'LL GET HIM IN THE BOX AND PUSH HIM INSIDE AS FAST AS POSSIBLE!
WE CAN KEEP IN TOUCH THROUGH TEL'S NEW CHAT-LINE SERVICE
WRIT
INVOICE
HELLO THIS IS EL TEL, GET ME ANOTHER NEW LAWYER!
HARK AT THE RAPTUROUS OVATION FROM OUR FANS
NO BERT THEY'RE CREDITORS!
WE WUZ ROBBED
DO I NOT LIKE THIS NEITHER!
THANKS TO S.NEVIN

From the immortal pen of SYLVIE KRIN, author of Born to be Queen *and* Heir of Sorrows, *comes...*

NEW PERSPECTIVES

THE STORY SO FAR: Prince Charles has launched a new architectural magazine and is addressing a distinguished gathering to celebrate the first issue.

Now read on...

"DON'T think that I am opposed to *all* modern architecture. Far from it, I greatly admire for example the work of er..." Charles glanced down at the text of his speech which he had tried to memorise but somehow the names had defeated him. "...Er ...Emile Embonpoint who designed the New Library at Deayton college in Cambridge which is really awfully good."

The audience broke into a ripple of applause at the name of the celebrated Belgian neo-classicist. Charles's speech was going well.

"Er... and Dmitri Homoerotikoff has done a lot of very fine work in the field of public swimming baths."

Again the professionals began to clap, delighted that Charles had chosen to include the highly-acclaimed Greek-Romanian post-neo-romanticist whose work in glass and iron had placed him at the pinnacle of critical acclaim.

As he gazed around the appreciative faces in the Marquess of Blandford room at St James's Palace, Charles sensed that his new venture had at last hit the right note.

There he could see all those who had toiled alongside him to create this historic and (dare he say it?) brilliant new magazine. There was the editor, the bespectacled and bow-tied Donald Coren, said to be one of publishing's big names, whom he had lured away from the world of in-flight magazines. Quite a coup to get the former editor of *Fly Oman!*, the *Gatwick Gazette* and *Tasmania in the Air!*!

And there next to him was Lady Lucinda Titter sipping freely from a glass of champagne, whose article on Victorian drain covers had undoubtedly been one of the highlights of the inaugural issue.

And to her right, the witty Australian transvestite Dame Edna James who had volunteered a 20,000 word article on the Art Deco cinemas of New South Wales. Yes, everyone who mattered in the exciting world of architecture was here. Charles moved confidently on to his conclusion.

"Ladies and gentlemen, speaking as one whose work has not always been appreciated by the media and often may I say, undervalued in comparison to that of certain other more modern, photogenic persons..."

He paused for the laughter which duly came and he glanced gratefully at the supplier of this witty aside, his speechwriter and adviser Professor Barkworth.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha," the room rocked with high spirited laughter and Charles delivered his final summing up.

"We have produced a magazine which reflects the spirit of the age. And as my old friend Sir Laurens Van der Post has put it, this is the age of the spirit."

He sat down to thunderous applause as flashbulbs popped and cameras whizzed. A throng of admirers immediately gathered round him.

"Brilliant, Sire."

"Wonderful, Your Majesty."

"You really showed them this time."

Yes, thought Charles, he really *had* shown them.

"There is a pile of free copies by the door," announced the seductive tones of Melissa Harpie, Charles's personal PR assistant as the press hurried back to file their copy. "Do please pick one up when you go. There are plenty there."

"Pretty good, eh, Melissa?" Charles gathered up his notes and prepared to leave. "Better than expected, I would say."

"Yes indeed, Sire. I think the media are really going to take this one on board. There was a real buzz tonight."

"A buzz? Yes I suppose there was a sort of buzz thingie about the whole... you know."

"And you were quite right to have a photo of yourself on the cover, Sir. That's what sells copies..."

CHARLES and his staff glanced in dismay at the morning's papers laid out before them. Staring up from every one was the picture of a woman festooned with elephant motifs. The headlines yelled: "Jumbo Di steps out", "What the elephant's Di got on?" "Yes it's Princessex Di!"

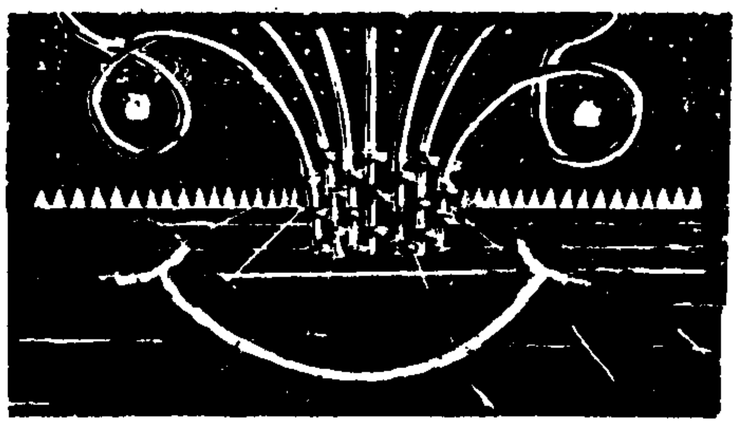
"A fine piece by Doctor Barkworth in the *Telegraph*, Sir. Page 27," purred Sir Alan Fitztightly. "It says you're ushering in a new age and there's a pretty colour picture of your model village in Dorset."

But Charles was not to be placated. "These elephants! There's only one word for them. They're appalling. They really are. I mean there are so many good designers around like the one I mentioned in my speech... Crispin Quintin... isn't that his name?"

Melissa gathered up the papers nervously. "These are only the early editions, Sire, they have very tight deadlines. I am sure they will cover it tomorrow and the Sundays will obviously really you know ..."

Her voiced trailed away. Charles stared into space disconsolately and imagined a herd of elephants trampling over his hopes, his dreams...

DIARY



SHERE HITE

I continue to meet well-orchestrated resistance to my surveys: 98% of all men and a small minority of repressed conservative women — who have been socialised to subjugate themselves to the male instinct — distrust my "under the microscope" approach to such relevant contemporary issues as sexuality and the family. They prefer, like the Victorians before them, to "brush it all under the carpet".

One method of vicious attack is to ridicule my probing, in-depth, inter-disciplinary, interactive and methodological research as in some way "unscientific". These same people would no doubt mercilessly accuse Lorena Bobbitt of being "unscientific" when she cut off her husband/persecutor's "penis".

As anyone who has studied them will attest, my surveys — or "reports" as I refer to conceptualise them — are acutely scientific in the broadest, non-"scientific" sense of the word. Perhaps readers of this magazine would care to participate in my future research. If so, please answer the following questions:

1. When you last masturbated in a lift and/or elevator, was there anyone in there with you, and, if so, were they also masturbating and if not, why not?

2. When the doors of the elevator unexpectedly opened and six or seven people stood gawping at you in the middle of you masturbatory act, did you experience a strong sense of guilt, embarrassment and/or sexual failure?

3. Were you then so traumatised that you found it hard to relate to other adults at work or in the home, and did you finally remove yourself from human contact of any kind until you were recommended by your doctor for immediate admission to the local state mental health institution?

Please answer "yes" to the above questions and send them to me, Shere Hite, at the Hite Foundation for Bogus Statistics. So far, we have had 100% success with this question, and many leading figures in the American Association of Sex Counsellors, Educators, Therapists and Statisticians are calling on Government for personal locking controls to be placed on the doors of elevators to prevent such indescribable traumas recurring in future. I thank you for your cooperation.

Statistically, as few as 2% of men are ever forced by their parents to wear a brassiere, yet as many as 72% of women have been requested by their parents to wear brassieres at one time in their lives. Why the imbalance?

"When I strangled my younger brother to death with my first brassiere, I was made to feel guilty by my father, who told me he would undoubtedly lose his temper if I ever thought of doing it again," writes one correspondent. "The experience of this brutal chastisement has stayed with me all my life, and I am now in my ninth year of trauma counselling."

From this, we learn that of the 23% of teenaged women who strangle their younger brothers with brassieres, an astonishing 92% have a sense of guilt forced upon them by one or both parents. What right has society to enforce such strong guilt association through such a "natural" act?*

According to my research into family and sexuality, one third of all married couples are not relating to each other physically in any way at all, another third are revolted by all forms of "sex" with their partner and a final third avoid all forms of human contact with their spouse beyond the purely verbal.

This represents to my mind a deep malaise within the very institution of marriage, for it means at most 0% of all married couples are experiencing any form of inter-sexuality at all. This confirms my suspicion that no babies were born to married couples anywhere in the world last year, leading experts to the inevitable conclusion that there is something deeply unstable in wedlock as we know it in the latter part of the 20th century. If you are a married woman between the ages of 20 and 55, please cooperate with the following questionnaire:

a. Why the hell did you marry him then?

b. And what kind of traumatic effect do you imagine it will have on your poor kiddies?

c. How many times did you refer yourself in emergency to your regular psychotherapist last month?

d. Are the scars still visible?

e. If not, why are you covering them up? Have you been made to feel guilty about them in some way?

Statistically, the traditional two-parent family is the enemy of the clitoral orgasm. The iconic family of Western Family Life — Jesus, Mary and Joseph — have never been portrayed by any major artist experiencing clitoral orgasm.

The shock-waves of this neglect continue to permeate our society at the profoundest levels. Statistically, 73% of Brazilian women between the ages of 18 and 35 confirm that they have never experience clitoral orgasm while eating their breakfast cereals. Interestingly, the chairpersons of all the leading Brazilian breakfast cereal companies and 95% of chairpersons of companies of breakfast cereals imported into Brazil are male. Until this severe masculine bias is addressed, the breakfast clitoral orgasm will continue to evade 37% of all Brazilian women.

"I have sometimes felt the urge to make love to a cockroach," writes one (male) correspondent, "but I have been impeded from it by guilt-feelings induced by a societal pressure that regards under-age sex (my cockroach is less than one year old) as somehow 'wrong' or 'improper'."

By the time they are ten years of age, an estimated 73% of all boys have experienced some form of sexual contact with goldfish (23%), cockroaches (17%) or white mice (64.5%). In the latter category, this has led 19% of them to have found their penises inextricably trapped in the mouse's play-wheel, 28% of them requiring immediate surgery. Parental attitudes to the erotic undercurrents that inevitably develop between children and small household animals must in future become less conventionally cohesed to outdated notions of "right" and "wrong". For a full theoretical critique of this important subject, please refer to my chapter, "Western Man: Husband, Father, Serial-Killer". Have a nice day now!

**None whatsoever. SH.*

REFUGEE COLLECTORS, Road Sweepers and General Labourers required for various temporary assignments. Telephone and transport essential.

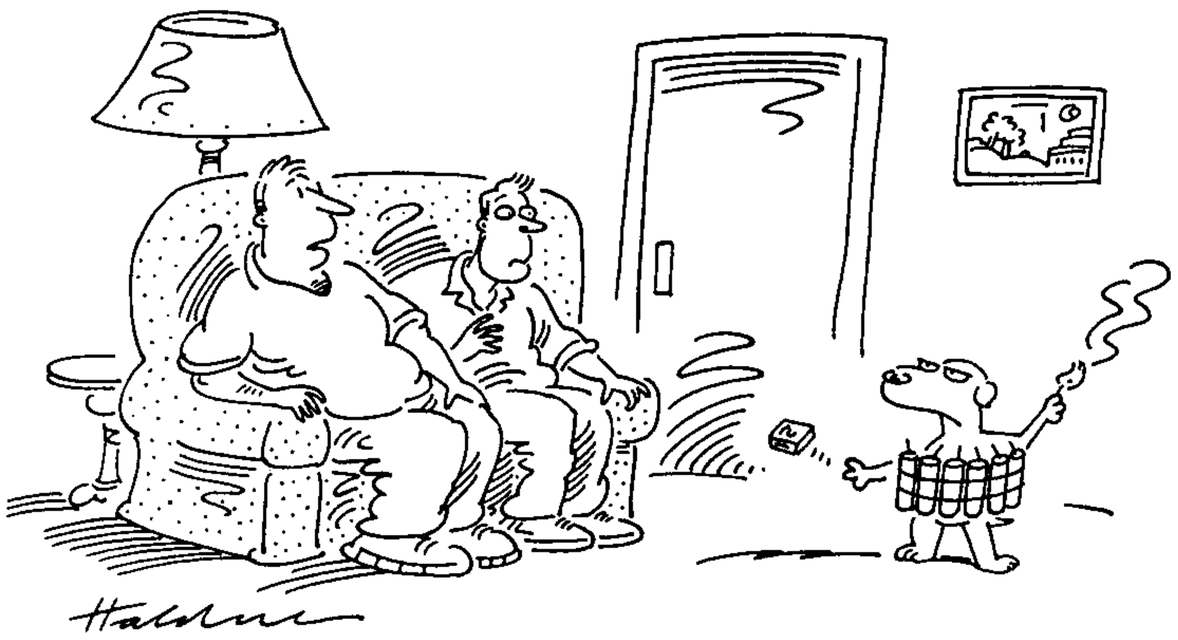
Evening Echo, Bournemouth

PROFESSIONAL male, slim, fit, 5'6" and 32, own porch, single, varied interests seeks attractive lady 26-32 friendship and possible relationship, photo if possible, ALA. — Please reply to Box Replies, Box

Sutton Coldfield News

HIGH QUALITY reliable domestic burglar at reasonable prices 2 year warranty.

Southend Yellow Advertiser



"Try not to show you're afraid of him"

HELL!

Gloucester's Man in the News Shows Us Round His Delightful Cromwell Street Home

Hell: Fred, tell us about your hobbies.

Fred: I've always loved gardening and DIY is my *(continued in Court 94)*

Literary Review

Glasgow deranger

How Late it Was, How Late
James Kelman
(Secker and Warburg, £14.99)

ONE OF the most rigorous orthodoxies maintained by the tiny band of reviewers who sift books for public consumption is that objective critical standards are back.

Gone is all the being nice to Kingsley, Anita and Maggie simply because they happen to be Kingsley, Anita and Maggie; in comes a bit of feisty neutrality, a bit of judging books on their merits. And so on. Sadly it doesn't work like that.

All that happens in palace revolutions is that the old gang get shot and are replaced by new royalty — Martin and Julian and Ian, for instance, all of whom now have book reviewers crawling over them because they happen to be, er, Martin, Julian and Ian.

Perhaps the greatest beneficiary of this revolt against the hoary monsters of the post-war English novel has been James Kelman. Ever since he made his mark in *Lean Tales* (1985), a collection that also featured his Glaswegian chums Alasdair Gray and Agnes Owens, critics have been lining up to compare him to Beckett and Kafka, to pronounce solemnly that the torrent of invective doesn't matter (it's "punctuation", apparently), and to go on about "displaced urban voices".

In the whole of literary London there are few more instructive and ironic spectacles than the sight of some Oxbridge babe, as Julie Burchill might put it, cosying up to foulmouthed Jim, who hates fucking Southerners, the "literary establishment", and on the occasion he was selected for the Booker shortlist back in 89 with *A Disaffection* disdained to turn up.

Of course, Jim had his fucking integrity to think of, and hats off to him for that. But is he any good? Up to a point.

Kelman specialises in low-life monologues with a faint philosophical tinge; the vagrant who's read a few books, capacious streams of consciousness reeking with fear, alienation and the memory of lost decencies. North of the border this has the same deleterious effect on would-be scriveners as Martin Amis on our own Oxbridge boys, and at least half the items sent each year to the *Scottish Short Stories* volumes are unbelievably dreary patois soliloquies on the "Ah'm fucking tellin' ye man ah wis fuckt" theme.

It was Kelman, though, who started all this (or did he? If I were the under-regarded Scots novelist William McIlvanny I'd be asking a few questions here), and the intensity — a sort of passionate anger that mimics thought without obvious contrivance — is usually quite stunning. Stunning for about 60 pages, that is.

Like Roddy Doyle, the effect is often suspiciously one-gear, and of course, London publishing being what it is, Kelman doesn't get edited so much as printed. The result is surprisingly repetitious ("At least he couldnay see cunts looking at him. Cause they would be. They would think he was pissed. They would. That was what they would think" etc etc), rambling, discursive in the wrong way, not giving a fair approximation of someone's thought processes, but just delaying the action.

This is especially irksome in *How Late it Was, How Late*, which involves the reader trying to work out what has happened to a drunken ex-con called Sammy who wakes up blind in a police cell. How did he lose his sight? Where is his girlfriend? Why do the police want to talk to him about "politics and violence"? Streams of consciousness might sparkle with surface glitter, but didn't they teach us at school that art was about discriminating, that is, thinking about it before you put it down?

Other major Kelman concerns are well to the fore, notably urban demotic (it can be unkindly but truthfully said that if you know the meaning of the word "fuck" then you've read 10 percent of his oeuvre at a stroke) and politics. Politics. The stanchions of auld Jim's political views can be found in recent essay collection *Some Recent Attacks* (AK Press £4.50), basically the old, unreconstructed Social Workers' Party line, which veers between the much-needed (assaults on Glasgow's Labour council) and the frankly barmy (Jim reckons that the educational system is a government-led conspiracy for subduing the working classes).

Underlying it all is an unrestrained hostility to — to take a few targets — Salman Rushdie, literary gents, fucking Southerners who write about books in posh papers. Agreeably the current novel provides its own cop-out clause — a moment when Sammy reflects that "Yer fucking brains man they live a life of their own, ye've got nay fucking control, nayn at all".

How true. And how neatly applicable to *How Late it Was, How Late*. None of this, needless to say, will cut much ice with the profile writers and the people at *The Late Show*. Stoping his ears to the squeals of pain, chortling at the tattered and much-chewed hands that feed him, Jim's made.

I FUCKIN' BELONG TO FUCKIN' GLASGEE DEAR OLD FUCKIN' GLASGEE TOON BUT THERE'S FUCKIN' SOMETHIN' FUCKIN' WRONG WITH FUCKIN' GLASGEE
'COS IT'S FUCKIN' GOIN' FUCKIN' ROOND AND FUCKIN' ROOND
K 94

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

☐ RANDOM HOUSE, home of the Gail Rebuck brand of "feminine management", has just published under its Century Business imprint a book called *No Hassle!*, which offers useful tips on tackling a range of stressful situations — including harassment, unethical behaviour and redundancy — to which executives are exposed.

The book will be of particular interest to the woman whose idea it was in the first place, the former editorial director of Century Business.

Shortly after commissioning it, she found herself in situations uncannily similar to those dealt with in its pages: three of her staff were sacked without her being consulted, and then she herself was abruptly fired by Rebuck's sinister *gauleiter* Simon King. Taking a tip from *No Hassle!*, she is believed to be in talks with Messrs Sue, Grabbit and Runne.

MERMAID'S TALE

■ *WHEN the Little Garden opera company rented the Mermaid Theatre's studio for a run of Hecate's Macbeth last October, the deal was negotiated with the Mermaid's artistic director, Marc Sinden, son of the famous Sir Donald.*

The contract, however, was drawn up by the theatre's operating company, Quorumcrest Limited.

Quorumcrest immediately breached its obligations by failing to heat the auditorium during the show. Its cheque for the returned deposit of £650 bounced three times before being honoured, and Quorumcrest also decided to withhold box office takings of £1,079.70.

Phone calls and recorded letters to the theatre elicited no response, and Marc Sinden is very embarrassed.

Quorumcrest is a tad less embarrassed. When Little Garden issued a county court summons against it in January, it did not respond. Now that Little Garden has obtained judgment — for £1,904.86 and £73.54 costs — Quorumcrest should expect a visit at its registered office, 97 Park Lane, from bailiffs who aren't in the least embarrassed to enforce the debt.

Quorumcrest is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Gomba Holdings UK, the master company of disgraced Abdul Shamji. It shares 97 Park Lane as a registered address with several other Shamji companies. According to Companies House, Quorumcrest's only director is Alim Shamji, son of the famous disgraced businessman Abdul (see Eyes passim).

'Bookworm'

REMAINDERS OF THE DAY

MEMOIRS OF A LIBEL LAWYER, Peter Carter-Ruck. A vivid look at the fascinating world of defamation. 294pp h/bk. B/w photos. Orig. £20.00 **NOW ONLY £3.99 (MEMLAW)**

SNIPCOCK & TWEED
IT'S ONE OF THOSE ROALD DAHL TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED
SURPRISINGLY, HE WAS A COMPLETE BASTARD!
ROALD DAHL A BIOGRAPHY
WELL I NEVER!

footnotes

BOB'S YOUR CHAIRMAN

TAKE OUT your exercise books, and without conferring or copying, see if you can work this out:

● Grant Maintained Schools Centre Lt gets three quarters of a million pounds this year from the department of education (taxpayer) to provide information and services to opted-out schools. The company won't have any government grant next year.

SIR BOB BALCHIN

● Instead, a huge new government grant (at least half a million) will be paid to the Grant Maintained Schools Foundation, which used to be a charity. It won't be a charity any more.

● The charity, which used to be called the Grant Maintained Schools Foundation, is now to be called the Grant Maintained Schools Trust.

The *Eye* asked the department of education why these complicated name changes were being made. It refused to reply, referring all questions to the quangos.

The *Eye* can reveal that the real reason is the confusion in government minds between public money for public purposes — and public money for carrying out Tory party propaganda.

In a rash moment in 1988, Kenneth Baker, then secretary of state for education, made a solemn promise that "not a penny" of the money dished out by the government to the Grant Maintained Schools Centre would be used for propaganda to persuade schools to opt out.

But in January 1993, a new Labour MP, Stephen Byers, started to ask questions about the Grant Maintained Schools Centre, and its big government grant. He asked, for example, who paid the salary of one Andrew Turner, of Choice, an organisation whose sole purpose is to campaign for schools opt-outs.

Turner is a Thatcherite Tory candidate, best known nowadays as the former boyfriend of Julia Stent who introduced her to Tim Yeo. Choice and Turner used the same handsome Westminster offices and the same telephone number as the Grant Maintained Schools Centre, and Byers's questions worried ministers.

In February 1993 they sent in an accounting officer from the department of education, Mr P.F. Slade. The department has refused to publish Mr Slade's report, but the *Eye* can now reveal its crucial section, which exposed an appalling muddle between the accounts of Choice and the accounts of the centre.

Mr Slade wrote: "The separation of cash books referred to by the Centre is in fact a meaningless separation since cash transfers are made between the two accounts in round sums where cash deficits arise. Thus in effect all the cash received and paid passes through mixed bank accounts... Systems are not in place which re-charge the above bodies with the full cost of services by the centre."

Thus the insistence by the centre that Turner's salary, phone bills for opt-out propaganda, etc, were paid out of private income was, effectively, meaningless since the accounts were all mixed up. In a panic, the department suppressed the Slade report and called in Coopers & Lybrand, whose senior partners charge £1,000 a day. The private accountants came up with a much more acceptable conclusion: "There was no suggestion of fraud or impropriety."

Nevertheless, the national audit office (NAO) "pointed to a risk that grant money might have financed non-eligible functions". And the Commons public accounts committee (PAC) last month reported: "We are concerned that the department's internal review in February 1993 identified weaknesses in the financial systems operated by the Grant Maintained Schools Centre Ltd."

At the same time the Charity Commissioners investigated the affairs of the Grant Maintained Schools Foundation and concluded that some of the work of the charity might have been confused with propaganda for opting out.

Stung by all this, education ministers decided on the confusing name changes outlined above. The main point of the changes is not to correct the muddle between propaganda and public money — but to legitimise it. Stephen Byers calls this the Sellafield Syndrome — "when something goes wrong you change the names and carry on as before". Indeed, the extent of the dramatic changes in the organisations can be measured from the following.

● The chairman of the old Grant Maintained Schools Centre was Sir Bob Balchin, chairman of the Tory party in the south-east of England.

● The chairman of the new Grant Maintained Schools Centre will be Sir Bob Balchin.

● The chairman of the new Grant Maintained Schools Foundation will be Sir Bob Balchin.

● The government has just announced the names of the members of the new funding agency for schools. A prominent name on the list is — oh, you must have worked it out by now.

BOP GO THE WEASELS!

THE collapse of Bophuthatswana has caused consternation among all those Tory MPs who for so many years strenuously sunned themselves and wined and dined at the expense of the puppet regime as they tried to get it recognised.

First in the field was Peter Emery, now *Sir* Peter, who for a fee three times as large as his parliamentary salary spent much of the early 1980s pleading the cause of "good old Bop". Emery got the push in 1984 after an embarrassing argument about a cheque for more than £70,000 which appeared to have been drawn for the wrong reasons.

He was replaced as Bop groveller-in-chief by Andrew Hunter, a nondescript former assistant master at Harrow. Hunter threw his considerable organising powers into a huge effort to transport Tory MPs to Bophuthatswana, where they and their wives would be entertained according to the lavish tastes of fun-loving President Mangope.

Hunter was assisted by Bop's man in London, Ian Findlay, whose salary was £100,000 a year and who gave evidence to the Commons select committee on parliamentary lobbying in April 1989.

"I think," he said, "there must have been 35 MPs who have visited Bophuthatswana by now." By amazing coincidence, and with one exception (believed to be Tim Rathbone MP) every single one of the lucky 35 returned from Bop convinced of the case for its recognition by the British government.

Four on a homeland island: *Hunter, Emery, Colvin, Marsh and ex-president Mangope (centre)*

"There is not the slightest doubt in my mind," said Mr Findlay cheerfully, "that we get a tremendous return in the dedication of these people." He guessed it cost the Bop government between £26,000 and £27,000 to send each MP and wife/husband.

It was worth every penny. "They [the MPs] have asked written questions and oral questions in the House. They have been to see Sir Geoffrey Howe. They have been to see the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher."

As the government (like every other government in the world) refused to recognise the Mangope regime, the flow of MPs to Sun City turned into a flood. By the end of 1990, apart from the US, there was no country in the world visited more frequently by British MPs than Bophuthatswana.

All the MPs were Tories or Unionists. Apart from Hunter and Emery, they included: Marion Roe; Sir George Gardiner; Terry Dicks; Jack Aspinwall; Tony Speller; Ivan Lawrence; Ian Mills; Michael Knowles; John Carlisle; Edward Leigh; and the much-travelled double-bed enthusiast, David Ashby.

Then there were the Ulster Unionists whose statelet shared so many laws and customs with South Africa and its puppets: the Rev Martin Smyth; William Ross; and Cecil Walker. From the Lords the most assiduous Bop supporter was the former Labour transport minister, now a Tory lord, Dick Marsh. So impressed was the president with a genuine member of the House of Lords that he gave the former socialist a genuine diamond.

Now, alas, Mangope is deposed, there is a threat of democracy throughout the land, diamonds are for never and the slogan for poor Andrew Hunter is: back to Basingstoke.

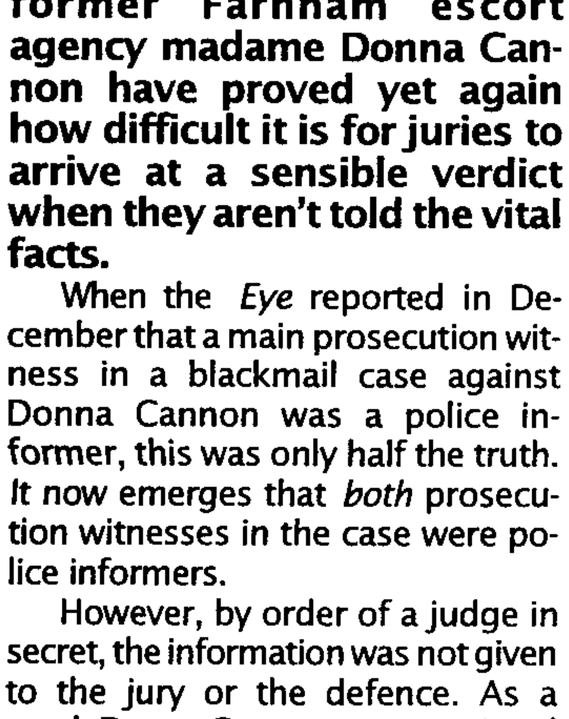
There are still some outstanding problems, however. What will happen to Bop House, the glamorous mansion in Holland Park where the president and his retinue used to stay during Wimbledon fortnight, not to mention Ian Findlay's very lovely free house in Amersham? No problem, though, about Bop's former agent in Tel Aviv, Mangope's special favourite, Shabetai Kalmanowich. He has been exposed as an agent of the Russian secret service, the KGB.

DONNA KEBABBED

■ THE amazing trials of former Farnham escort agency madame Donna Cannon have proved yet again how difficult it is for juries to arrive at a sensible verdict when they aren't told the vital facts.

When the *Eye* reported in December that a main prosecution witness in a blackmail case against Donna Cannon was a police informer, this was only half the truth. It now emerges that *both* prosecution witnesses in the case were police informers.

However, by order of a judge in secret, the information was not given to the jury or the defence. As a result Donna Cannon was convicted of blackmail.



DONNA CANNON

The information about the second witness came out in another trial of Donna Cannon at Winchester crown court from 28 February to 11 March. She was charged with burgling Joanna West, a fellow "escort" at her former Surrey agency.

Ms West had been the second main witness in the earlier blackmail trial. Her calm and moving evidence about how Donna had asked her to cooperate in a blackmail plot went down well with the jury. It was vital support for the story of James Lawson, who agreed in court that he had had sex with one of the agency's girls and had failed to pay the £30 commission. He then alleged that Donna had blackmailed him by threatening to accuse him of rape if he didn't pay up.

GRAND SLUSH QUIZ

THE agriculture ministry spent £27,110 on consultants in 1984-85. How much do you think it spent on consultants in 1992-93?
A) £7,010
B) £70,010
C) £700,010
D) £7,010,814?

Answer: D.

The *Eye* disclosed that in 1988 Lawson, then called McNeil, had played a big role in a drugs smuggling operation. He had got off without charge when he grassed on his fellow smugglers. This information was vital to Donna Cannon's defence. Lawson's evidence was dubious enough. If the jury had known he was a police informer and former drugs smuggler, they might have formed an even more hostile opinion of him.

At the start of the burglary trial last month, Donna Cannon's lawyers at last got hold of a transcript of the prosecution's ex-parte application to Judge Starforth-Hill seeking permission not to disclose Lawson's role as informant. The judge instantly gave that permission. The prosecution also asked for permission not to disclose that Joanna West was a registered police informant. Once again, the judge instantly agreed.

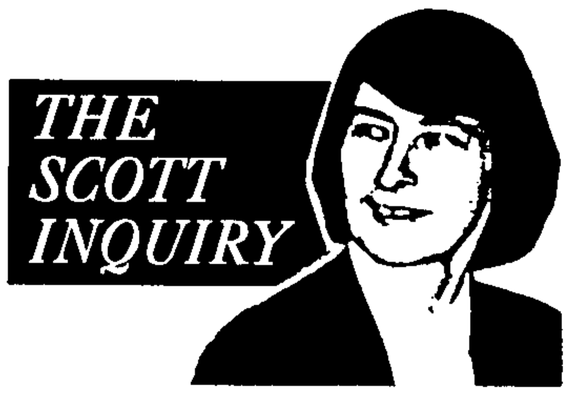
Joanna West claimed in the second trial that Donna Cannon had stolen some clothes and jewellery from her house. This allegation lost much of its lustre when a young man called Gary Ellis told the court that he had burgled the house, and Donna Cannon proved that all the goods she was said to have stolen belonged to her.

West also accused Donna Cannon of "sensationalism and cheque book journalism" — by selling the *Eye* our 31 December story. When this was publicly denied by a fax from the *Eye*, Joanna West was asked how she knew about the payment which never was. "Oh," she muttered, "Dick told me."

"Dick" was a reference to DC Richard Silver of Hampshire CID, the officer in charge of the case. DC Silver took it on himself during the trial to ring *Private Eye* and try to elicit from the person who answered the telephone that the *Eye* had paid money for the story, which it had not. The constable also surprised observers of the case by going for lunch at the Exchange pub with one of Donna Cannon's co-defendants, Lorraine Buckingham.

In these bizarre circumstances, it was obviously of the greatest relevance that Joanna West was a police informant. But still the judge in the second trial — a newly-appointed recorder called Linda Sullivan — refused the defence permission to disclose this fact to the jury. In another secret hearing with prosecution counsel Simon Privett, Judge Sullivan agreed that the full facts of Ms West's relationship with the police should be kept secret.

Fortunately, the evidence was so overwhelming for the three defendants that they were unanimously found not guilty. But the rejoicing at Winchester crown court may be shortlived: Donna Cannon comes up for sentence on the blackmail case on 25 March.



Customs Gilt

PERHAPS the most difficult question in the whole Iraqgate mystery is: why did HM customs proceed with the Matrix Churchill prosecution when all the cards (not to mention the government) were stacked against it?

The answer is in this roughly-drawn Christmas card circulated in customs offices in December 1990. Operation Bertha was the enormous customs investigation into the building in Britain of the biggest gun in the history of the world for export to Iraq in flagrant breach of the British government's arms ban.

Customs arrested Chris Cowley, a British engineer who had supervised the supergun project in Iraq, and Peter Mitchell, the managing director of Walter Somers, the firm which made the barrels. Senior officers were confident they had a cast-iron case.

Imagine their horror when a barrister nominated by the then attorney-general, Sir Patrick Mayhew, didn't agree. An opinion signed by Julian Bevan said there was less than a 50-50 chance of a conviction. So shocked were customs commissioners that they asked for a special meeting with Mayhew and demanded that their prosecution go ahead. Mayhew stuck by Bevan's opinion. HM customs had no choice but to drop charges (if it hadn't, Mayhew could have stepped in, taken over the case and dropped it anyway).

As the cartoon indicated, the feelings in HM customs of rage and betrayal at the government knew no bounds. Senior officers, not best known for their rebellious instincts, went around saying that they were "bloody well determined to get someone behind bars on this Iraq arms business".

A glorious opportunity at once arose. Shortly before the supergun charges were dropped, three directors at the Midlands engineering firm of Matrix Churchill had been arrested on suspicion of exporting arms to Iraq.

Customs knew perfectly well that the main reason for dropping the charges in the supergun case was that the government and the security services were secretly giving the nod to arms sales to Iraq. They knew that any prosecution would run up against the objection that the government itself had encouraged the very illegal sales which were now being prosecuted. How to get round such a defence?

The answer has been slowly emerging from the Scott inquiry in recent days. Senior officers dreamt up SPEDEPT, which stands for "special design package theory". The charge against the Midlands directors, they argued, would be based on the fact that the machine tools for Saddam were specially designed to make weapons. Whatever else the government had encouraged, ran the argument, they could not possibly have suggested that equipment specially designed for arms could be legally exported. This way, the top brains in HM customs imagined, they could go ahead with the prosecution without fear of contradiction.

SPEDEPT was an entirely new concept. Because nothing like that had ever been argued before, HM customs was confident that with the help of public immunity certificates to keep out embarrassing documents it could defeat the main defence argument: government complicity.

SPEDEPT was spelled out carefully to Scott in the second week of March by two customs investigators, Peter Wiltshire and Cedric Andrew. Scott called it a "brainchild" -- and then blew it out of the water. Splitting hairs himself, he argued that technically the Matrix Churchill lathes (unlike the associated software) had not been specially designed for arms purposes. SPEDEPT, in short, was a load of verbal codswallop, whose only purpose was to justify HM customs' obsession with securing a conviction.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 071 287 3183

In the City

SHAREHOLDERS in cut-price CD/cassette peddlers Tring International will not be reassured to learn why accountant Alan Wheatley, the former senior partner at Price Waterhouse now much coveted as a non-executive director, turned down the chance to be Tring's chairman ahead of its recent flotation.

Nor will their peace of mind be increased to learn that no fewer than four other well regarded City suits also rejected the Tring shilling to become non-executives.

Wheatley was approached when it was first intended to float Tring last December. But he is understood to have swiftly raised a number of worries with Tring and its broker sponsors UBS which he found impossible to resolve and so declined the invitation to be chairman, thereby putting the flotation off until a new chairman (Anthony Morris) could be found and the placing went ahead last month.

What were Wheatley's concerns? Not surprisingly as an experienced City hand he raised the ominous offshore shadow of Paul Levinson, a major shareholder in Tring represented on the board by his son Mark. As detailed in *Eye* 840, Levinson has a long history of selling swans which quickly turn into dead ducks once the buyers have parted with their money.

Wheatley was also concerned about the amount of cash being extracted by Levinson's protégés, Tring founders Mark Frey and Philip Robinson, through unloading shares into the placing. With Levinson and another early investor they were sharing £22 million.

Seeing the dangers, Wheatley also wanted support from some heavyweight non-executives who could control Levinson and his crew.

UBS tried but failed to resolve any of the matters to Wheatley's satisfaction. The final development which triggered Wheatley's decision to walk away was when four nominees as non-executive directors — Peter Lewis, Robin Field, Brian Pemberton and Keith Harris — all declined to get involved.

Despite this stunning vote of no confidence, UBS, in the shape of Glyn Hirsch, still pressed on after a two-month hiatus explained as due to new issue congestion in the stock market. In reality the cause was the need to find replacements prepared to serve under the Levinson colours. But then to pull the plug would have meant losing a fat fee.

Whether the risk to UBS's reputation will prove worth that cheque remains to be seen. History is not on the brokers' side.

THE SERIOUS Farce Office/City police case over the 1992 collapse of Landhurst Leasing continues its slow progress towards a number of arrests. It is understood that the SFO has narrowed the proposed prosecution down to eight to 10 specific allegations of fraudulent lending which misused the £120 million provided by Landhurst's banking syndicate.

The Football Association will be relieved to learn that it seems El Tel will not be required to make an appearance — in any capacity. Landhurst chairman Ted Ball's generosity to the new England coach is not expected to feature in the prosecution case. Even the SFO could see that Venables could turn into a match losing own goal.

But whether the defence will feel the need to call upon Ball's long list of grateful borrowers from the worlds of sport, show biz and the City remains to be seen. A point those touting the possible stock market comeback of Philip Green in Owen & Robinson or Brown & Jackson would do well to consider.

THE *Sunday O'Reilly*, aka the *Sunset Times*, has been quick to suggest that the would-be press baron who can't quite cut it in the big game is set to sell his near 30 percent of Newspaper Publishing now that hopes of Heseltine-imposed restrictions on the Mirror-led consortium have been dashed.

Whether this is just a desperate final ploy to obtain boardroom leverage remains to be seen, but the reality is that O'Reilly has painted himself into a humiliating corner from which a sale at minimal profit may be the best retreat possible and one for which his apologists are preparing the way.

Like Forte in Savoy Group and the Fayeds in Sears Holdings, Tony O'Reilly discovered that the only stake that matters in a public company is 50.1 percent. Without that you cannot force board representation or impose your views — but you can be locked in. Such strategic stakes are always easier to buy than to sell. And in the case of Newspaper Publishing that means being locked into an investment with not only no say but no dividend income with which to service the £24 million investment.

It is true that O'Reilly can block any decision requiring shareholders' approval by a 75 percent vote, but that could make the *Independent*'s future even more desperate and so devalue the Irishman's existing investment.

If O'Reilly does not accept the consortium's bid and creep away with a £1 million petty cash profit, he could find himself unable to sell at other than a loss. Furthermore, there is the anticipated rights issue coming down the line which would mean putting up even more cash or seeing the 30 percent stake diluted and so even less clout.

By failing to go for a knockout bid at 400p O'Reilly lost the *Independent* to Mirror Group Newspapers. He tried to be too clever and too cheap. The Irishman is now a four-time loser. As in Australia with Fairfax and with first MGN itself and then United Newspapers, he has come off second best. Ireland and South Africa are clearly minor leagues where O'Reilly belongs — not in the media big league where it seems he lacks courage, cash or cleverness or maybe all three.

The *Independent* position was put succinctly by one of O'Reilly's closest advisers: "He has fucked it up."

BUSILY preparing the way for his much trumpeted legal application to block the fraud case against him, the fugitive Asil Nadir has come up with yet another dubious "witness" to support his claims of prosecutorial and police misconduct.

Thanks to his hagiographer Tim Hindle (*The Sultan of Berkeley Square* and *Asil Nadir — Fugitive from Injustice*) now installed as editor of *EuroBusiness*, we learn of the amazing revelations of Michael O'Keefe, who joins self-confessed liars Michael Francis and Wendy Welsher as affidavit witnesses backing the Nadir application.

O'Keefe claims to have witnessed a meeting between Francis, a career criminal, and Scotland Yard detectives within a month of Nadir's 1990 arrest. The significance of that claim is that it seeks to buttress Francis' tale that the police recruited him into a plot to bribe the Nadir trial judge at this early stage because they already knew they had no case. O'Keefe also claims to have gone to Paris with detectives to witness for Francis the handing over of £100,000 from Nadir's mother as part of the plot.

Needless to say, the police officers concerned tell a somewhat different story. They deny any such meeting with Francis or any dealings with O'Keefe — who just happens to have been an associate of Francis in the security business. Like Francis, O'Keefe is now ensconced in Northern Cyprus. Why? Because the police suggested he might meet with a fatal road accident! Whether O'Keefe proves any more credible than Nadir's previous star witnesses, Francis and Welsher, appears unlikely.

Meanwhile Nadir's position in his refuge continues to look less secure. His erstwhile protector, Turkish Cypriot president Rauf Denktash, is said to have been angered by Nadir's use of his newspapers and public meetings to rally support as a possible rival. With the coalition government composed of his enemies Nadir is appearing increasingly isolated.

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Sunday Express

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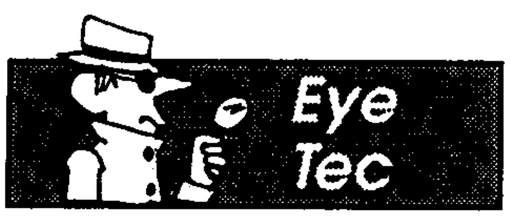

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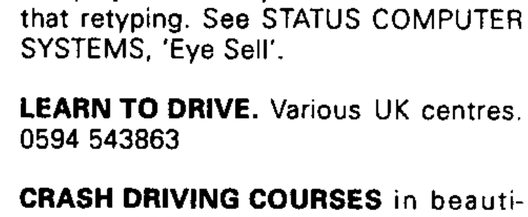

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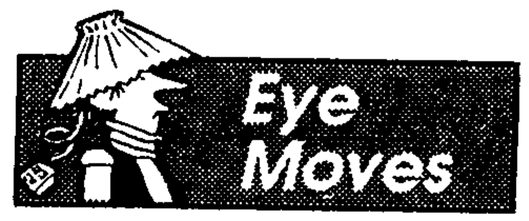

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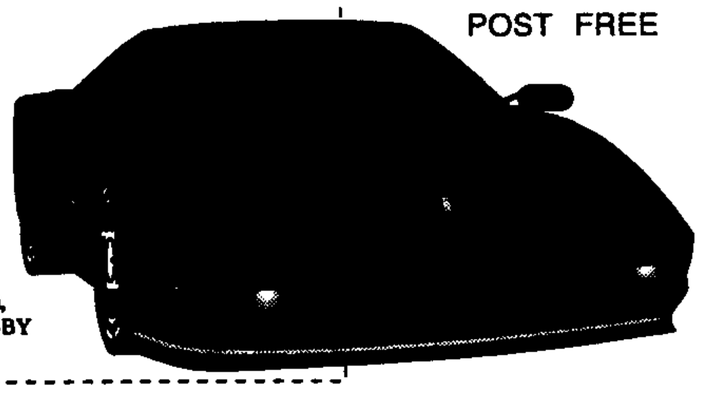

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ADVENTURESS SEEKS man to sate wanderlust. Box 6742.

GENTLEMAN, 45, single, 6', solvent, fit. Likes wining, dining, cinema, sports. Seeks tall, voluptuous, active lady for full but uncomplicated relationship. Box 6842.

WAYWARD MARK ANTONY seeks restoration Lady Macbeth. Ideally an intellectual and mature brunette or redhead with blue or green eyes. Box 6942.

FEMALE GRADUATE, 30, small, bored chatterbox seeks tall intelligent, honest, single male for bag-carrying and companionship please. Box 7042.

GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL gentleman (early 40s), compassionate disposition and holding traditional values, seeks an educated, old-fashioned lady of the 'nylons school' and nostalgic outlook for close personal friendship. Preferred age range 32-50 years. An introverted, solidly middle-class lady who might not normally respond to such an advertisement. Genuine first advert. Confidentiality assured. Midland counties. Box 7142.

HANDSOME, TALL male, 36, 6', single, highly intelligent, easy going, warm, romantic. Seeks beautiful young (18-32) female (any nationality) for friendship/relationship. Brief(ish) letter, M3/M4 corridor/south. Box 7442.

PETITE, CURVY married woman (37) seeks discreet, entertaining (younger?) man for friendship, laughs, maybe affair. Passionate about blues, rock and motorbikes, long hair and long legs. Photo please. West London. Box 7542.

INTERESTED IN COUNTRY affairs? Very discreet English country lady would like to meet very discreet English country gentleman 50-60. Ideally in Shires between Oxford and Cambridge. Box 3942.

CHEEKY, SLIGHTLY chubby, but nevertheless attractive happy chappy (thirties), would like to indulge in discreet heterosexual hanky panky. Photo appreciated. London. Box 4042.

ATTRACTIVE MALE curator, 29, seeks Venus de Milo. Sense of humour essential, arms optional. Box 3542.

YOUNG MALE seeks older female for sensual relationship. Box 3042.

Our apologies! There is still a slight delay before your Eye Love ad can be published due to the enormous demand of these exclusive, funny, highly successful and popular ads.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 34, (overpaid accountant, underpaid composer) is beginning to doubt the existence of unattached ladies in London with brains, humour and normal dietary requirements who seriously want a relationship. Please prove me wrong. Photo and phone appreciated. Box 4741.

TIED LADY,39, seeks mad doc, soldier etc as penfriend. Midlands. Box 6342.

NORTHOLT, MIDDLESEX man, 44, 6'1", outgoing personality, home owner, seeks female permanent relationship. 081-845 7707. N/S

WANTED: WONDERFUL witty, charming chappie for very individual stylish mid-30s girlie. South M/C, Cheshire. Box 6442.

WARM, ATTRACTIVE slim, humorous, tactile female loves theatre, art, seeks similar male (45+) for mutual loving and laughter. Photo, phone appreciated. Box 6542.

CHRONIC PARANOID schizophrenic yearns for pretty alien bird, 200+, for slow comfortable sex. London. ALA. Box 6642.

I WANT TO fall in love again! Blonde, blue-eyed, attractive intelligent — ravaged and neglected — seeks tall king of this jungle (40-55ish). Integrity, culture, humour essential. This lioness longs to be a kitten. Please help! S East. Box 5142

LONDON, WARM and loving lady, 39, seeks affluent older gent for fulfilling relationship. Box 5242.

WIDOWER, 67, tall, professional, energetic, wishes to meet slim, shapely, cultivated lady for lasting companionship. London/Home Counties. Photo and telephone requested. Box 5342.

MELLOW, MID 30s married man, desperately seeking discreet dalliance with desirable dame (Rubenesque rather than Modigliani figure, 30- early 40s), before he finally ripens and rots! London. Box 5442.

ATTRACTIVE BLONDE Kentish lady, divorced, fun-loving, warm, young forties, seeks like-minded positive male for possible long-term relationship. Photo welcomed. Box 5542.

PARTNER WANTED: must be male (not necessarily reconstructed), solvent, unattractive, relishing relationship with smiling educated country (Yorks) woman (49½) (tallish, thinnish, darkish, pretty legs). Box 2742.

TEMPORARY (4 MONTHS) husband, 18-25, sought by blonde, 18, to irritate some people. Warped sense of humour essential. Any offers? Box 2842

ATTRACTIVE, SINCERE professional Russian lady, 30s, needs caring by discreet, mature, sensitive man (London). Photo appreciated. Box 2942.

INFLAMMABLE, handsome writer, 40, seeks serene and sylphish muse. Photo please. Box 2142.

OLIVER (29), final year student seeks intelligent, hedonistic female for extra-curricular fun and frolics. Coventry area. Photo appreciated. Box 2242.

DO YOU EXIST? My ideal woman — GSoH, kind-natured, intelligent, likes travel, food, music, theatre. Has very short straight bobbed hair and stylish appearance. Recent photo appreciated. I'm a slim, 5'9" 40s professional man and very solvent. Box 2342.

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WRITE YOUR NAME & ADDRESS ON THE BACK OF YOUR CHEQUE

SLIM BLONDE singer/scribe, 29, suffocating in Suffolk seeks interesting older man for inspiration. Box 2442.

ATTRACTIVE, SUCCESSFUL businessman, 35, would like to hear from females who like being wined and dined in style. For occasional discreet liaisons. London Box 2542.

UGLY, FAT slob, married, 42, seeks myopic lady for passionate liaisons. Sickbags provided on first meeting only. Oxford. Box 2642.

"BASIC INSTINCT" attractive natural blonde, slenderly delectable, late 40s, 5'4", seeks mature professional cleanshaven man-of-the-world, n/s, extrovert, SoH, caring sensitivity, for mutual very discreet meaningful relationship (optimistically ongoing?) without permanent ties to enjoy up-market wining, dining, etc. Day-time preferred, some evenings, occasional weekend. No hypocrites, London Area, photo (exchange), phone no, letter ensures immediate response to genuinely motivated replies. Box 1642.

PROFESSIONAL MALE 40, graduate, solvent, semi-detached, reasonably attractive, many interests, seeks woman, 35+ for friendship and companionship. Box 1742.

WHY NOT? Handsome, 38, single male with own city flat. Mad SoH with huge amounts of love to give to slim attrative female 25-30, likewise SoH into all current music. Box 1842.

MARRIED MAN, 36, handsome, tall, fair, slim, successful, articulate and fun. Age, colour, status, height not important but same thirst for life and adventure. Discretion assured/expected. Box 1942.

EX-CRUSTY JOURNALIST (M, 24) seeks nice girl for for laughs and tokes. London/elsewhere. Box 2042.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE, intelligent blonde, late 20s, enjoys dancing, good food, talking and keeping fit seeks man. Box 3142.

MARRIED MAN, professional, 47, good company, presentable, discreet, tired but unbreakable marriage, seeks lady for relationship on her terms. London/travel. Box 3242

Eye Soldier

RAF OFFICER marooned in desert stop requires feminine correspondence stop will have balls upon return stop partying won't stop photo please. Box 7242.

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★ "Before learning your techniques I had tried everything on the market to make me more successful with women - but nothing seemed to work. Now things couldn't be better and I see a different girl every night of the week"

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MR WONDERFUL, 32, tall, hunky, trendy, witty, likes the Gap, Pearl Jam, Thailand. Seeks funny, hip, beautiful babe, 25-35, for true romance. Ring 0660 205155

VIVACIOUS AQUARIAN LADY, 35, petite and attractive. Seeks intelligent, professional, handsome and sincere gent for fun, friendship and outings, (maybe romance?). Ring 0660 205136

INTELLIGENT, LIKEABLE MALE, 33, seeks lady for laughs and maybe for life. Ring 0660 205107

FEMALE, 41, avid All Blacks supporter, likes theatre, music, especially country, homemaking, extremely easy-going, practical, GSOH looking for man to be my best friend plus. Ring 0660 209610

SALES MARKETING DIRECTOR, 57, warm personality, enjoys theatre, movies, dining out, seeks intelligent, sensual woman, for good friendship, maybe more. Ring 0660 205760

TERRIFIC JEWISH modern female, 42. I am warm, intelligent, sunny, attractive, slim and sensual, seeking likeminded, fun loving, honest guy, to be my friend and lover. Ring 0660 205182

ATTRACTIVE, ATTENTIVE and romantic Leo who enjoys the cinema, travel and good food, seeks beautiful, intelligent, slim lady, 28-35, with similar interest with view to sharing. Ring 0660 205036

ATTRACTIVE IRISH WOMAN, 34, seeks a fun and committed relationship with attractive 'together' man, 30-42, who is able and ready for such an adventure. Ring 0660 205212

NOVELIST AND ART DEALER, affluent, Chelsea-based, Oxford-educated, good looking, 6ft 1in, divorced, seeks upmarket, n/s, tall, intelligent, attractive woman, 28-35, into travel, music, psychology, books, fitness. Ring 0660 205077

ATTRACTIVE, WARM, INTELLIGENT woman, 44, seeks intelligent, left of centre, laid-back man with sense of humour. Ring 0660 205055

ATTRACTIVE MALE, 44, West Midlands, restless, happy, affectionate, intelligent, gsoh, seeking slim, pretty, bright female, 28-40, for country walks and cuddles. Ring 0660 205922

DEAR DATE FAIRY, I'd like a solvent, 30-38, tall, handsome, sporty chap with charm, a deep voice and very soft centre. Love Ms No Chance. Ring 0660 205052

TAKE A CANADIAN, male, 29, tall and fit, lots of interests, gsoh, drop him in London, keep him busy, and what do you get. Ring 0660 205042

WOMAN SEEKS HONEST, open-minded, youthful man, who is articulate, sensitive, intelligent, intuitive, loving and tactile, preferably tall, n/s, vital. Objective - sharing life and mutual interests. Ring 0660 205135

UNEMPLOYED HEART seeks full time employment. Happy working nights. Successful, bohemian, handsome male, 37, needs sweet and beautiful younger female for lasting, intimate relationship. Ring 0660 205161

29 YEAR OLD, single, black, professional female, 5ft 11in, slim and attractive, own home and car, seeks a uniformed white professional male, tall, 30-45, attractive, for friendship or romance. Ring 0660 205592

SLIM MALE, 41, 6ft, dark curly hair, graduate, solvent, n/s. Seeks intelligent, down to earth woman, maybe tall brunette. Ring 0660 205084

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE, 24, long brown hair, voluptuous, blue eyes, seeks dark haired, attractive youngish male, for long term relationship, must be genuine, caring, honest and n/s. Ring 0660 209561

LOOKING FOR A MAN? then why not try our new Library Line service. To listen to a selection of past, present and even future male Opening Lines advertisers, just dial this number. Ring 0660 204222

ONCE IN A LIFETIME offer, little bit tasty, late 30s redhead, curvy, open minded, seeks man, 20-30, for possible long term relationship. Ring 0660 209593

LADY, EDUCATED, INTELLIGENT, attractive, seeks solvent English gentleman, 45-50 max, intelligent, educated, slim to medium, for friendship/companionship. Ring 0660 209612

BORED BERKSHIRE DIVORCEE, 38, Sagittarius. Professional business woman wants theatre, dinner, fun and attention from 6ft plus intellectual male bombshell. London area. Ring 0660 205104

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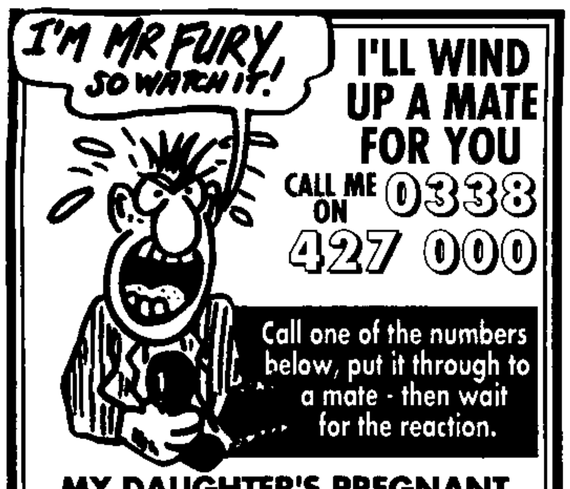

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